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ABSTRACT

This booklet is designed to be used by facilitators of the Canadian Career Development Foundation's "The Leading Edge: A Career Development Workshop Series for Young Adults." The guide provides information, including objectives of the workshops and lists of required materials, needed in order to facilitate an introductory session as well as the six workshops in the series. Each section contains samples of material suitable for transparencies to be used in the workshops. The six workshops are: "Setting the Stage: The Changing World of Work," designed to help clarify the world of work and apply that understanding to personal career development; "Recognizing Your Leading Edge," designed to initiate a shift from traditional job search to self-marketing; "Powerful Resume Writing," which maximizes the effectiveness of this key component of the work search; "Pro-Active Work Search Tools," which aims to build skills supporting nontraditional work search techniques such as information interviewing, networking, and proposal writing; "Your Leading Edge in Action," which focuses interview skills and introduces professional portfolios; and "Consolidation: Planning the Next Steps of the Journey," which integrates information into a personally meaningful sense of career development. The program goals are to help participants "get the big picture" in focus and determine how this relates to them personally and professionally. (Contains 14 references.) (Author/AVC)

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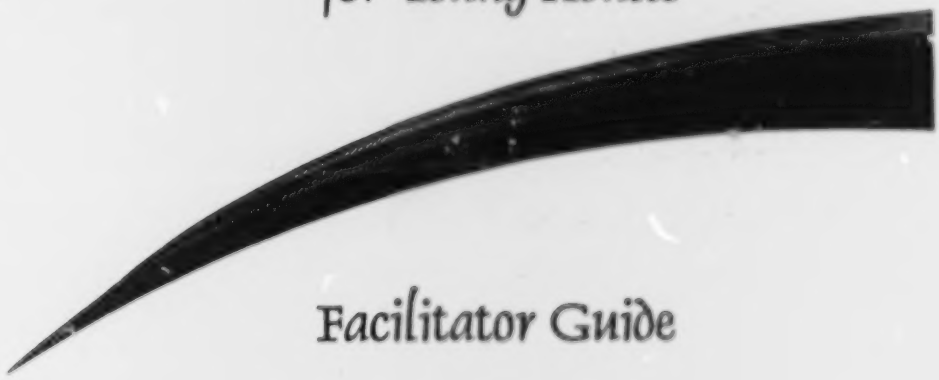
The Leading Edge :

A Career Development Workshop Series for Young Adults



Facilitator Guide

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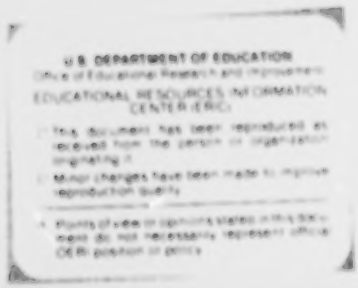

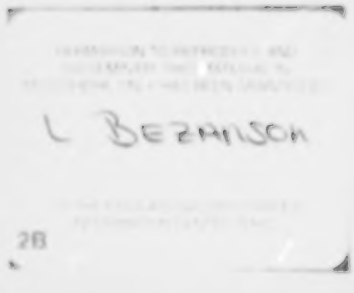

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A Career Development Workshop Series for Young Adults

Facilitator Guide

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The Leading Edge: A Career Development Workshop Series for Young Adults

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To the Facilitator

Introduction

The Leading Edge is a comprehensive career development workshop series for young adults. The series uses a range of dynamic group activities and individual reflection to focus on the following *6 Workshop Themes:*

- ***Setting the Stage: The Changing World of Work***

  To clarify what's happening in the world of work and apply that understanding to personal career development as well as begin to record career journeys through portfolio compilation;

- ***Recognizing Your Leading Edge***

  To initiate a shift from traditional job search (looking for a job by promoting your experience, degree or diploma) to self-marketing (identifying and creating opportunities for work by promoting your skills, abilities and strengths);

- ***Powerful Résumé Writing***

  To maximize the effectiveness of this key component of the work search/marketing strategy;

- ***Pro-active Work Search Tools***

  To build skills to support non-traditional work search techniques (such as information interviewing, networking and proposal writing);

- ***Your Leading Edge in Action***

  To practice targeted résumé writing and interview skills and to introduce the use of portfolios;

- ***Consolidation: Planning the Next Steps of the Journey***

  To reflect on program learning and to integrate labour market information and self-awareness into a personally meaningful sense of career direction/purpose and a concrete plan of action.

There are many options for delivering the Leading Edge. All 6 Workshops may be offered to groups sequentially over a 3-4 day period. Conversely, select workshops may be delivered independently. The program has been developed with the intent of supporting flexible implementation. The introductory session of the *Leading Edge* program can be used to begin any of the workshops. It should be noted that the Consolidation workshop is written with the intent of bringing together all of the activities and learning of the proceeding workshops. If previous workshops have not been completed, this final session may be modified to focus exclusively on goal setting and action planning.

Regardless of how you choose to structure your delivery, the program is intended for delivery to **groups**, so it will be important to attend to group process issues. You will want to be aware of how group members are interacting, matching the level of risk and structure of activities with their level of comfort. If possible, the room should be comfortable and set up in a way that allows participants to see each other. As a facilitator, you will want to consider your ongoing strategies for ensuring that your objectives match group expectations and for establishing norms for group functioning.

- ***Group Expectations***

  After you have reviewed the agenda for each workshop, we'd suggest taking time to review the expectations that group members have for the session. It doesn't have to take a lot of time, but it is important to discuss frankly and openly their expectations for learning in the session. There are many ways to access group expectations -- One simple method is to have participants complete the sentence: *"For me, this workshop will be successful if I leave with....."* Record all responses to this question on a flip chart and post the sheet(s) in a visible spot in the room. You will then need to assess together the extent to which the session objectives address their key learning expectations and adjust the content/process as necessary/possible. Note that some expectations may be beyond the scope of the session. Be sure to be clear about the intent of the workshop and its limitations. If you are delivering the workshops over an extended period, you may wish to revisit participant expectations and confirm with them that their expectations are being met. Having this kind of discussion is a direct and reliable way to ensure that participants see the relevance and value of the session.

- ***Group Norms***

  Group norms are guidelines for how the group agrees to behave so that group learning goals are achieved and that individual learning needs are met to the greatest extent possible. For example, two key norms that are often requested by group members are confidentiality and constructive participant to participant feedback. Norms can shape members' responsibilities and behaviour and can guide how they will solve problems, make decision, and resolve conflicts within the group. We'd suggest asking the group to establish a few (5-10) norms that

they can agree are important to their effective functioning. Post the norms in a visible location in the room and revisit them periodically as you move through the program together. Be prepared to add to and/or amend the norms as needed.

Note that norms can be established both implicitly (naturally adopted by the group without actually talking about it) and explicitly (as identified in the above process). Typically, implicit norms emerge as a result of your modeling. They may, however, also be shaped by the dominant behaviour of a minority. Regardless of how they are established, norms are powerful influencers of group learning. Setting norms as outlined above ensures that the group norms actually reflect the preferences and priorities of the full group. Respected norms can create an environment where each participant feels like an integral part of what is happening and has a sense of contributing to the full group's learning. If norms are violated, it is critical to address it by revisiting norms with the group. This reinforces that the process of norm-setting is relevant and that participants' stated needs will continue to be valued and respected.

We encourage you to make this program your own. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance to you as you deliver *The Leading Edge* series.

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Table of Content

Introduction **1**
- Introduction Session 2

Setting the Stage: The Changing World of Work **6**
- The Current World of Work 7
- High Five Career Development Messages 8
- Structure of the Labour Market 13
- The Changing Workplace 23
- Portfolio Building 25

Recognizing Your Leading Edge **29**
- Dependable Strengths 30
- Charland's Work Analysis 36
- Continuum of Work Alternatives 38
- Link of Self-Marketing 38

Powerful Résumé Writing **41**
- Name That Drink 42
- The Functional Résumé 45
- Career Objective 48
- Electronic Résumés 50

Proactive Work Search Proposal **54**
- Information Interviewing 55
- Networking 60
- The Employment Proposal 62

Your Leading Edge in Action **68**
- Your Leading Edge in Action - Mock Interviews 69
- Cover and Following Letters 72

Consolidation **75**
- Leading Edge Wheel 77
- Vision/Mission Statement 80
- Career-Life Project 81
- Goal Setting 87
- "Whole-Brained" Approach to Goal Setting 88
- Goal Test 90
- Action Planning 92
- Contingency Planning 94

Bibliography **97**

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

- Ice Breaker
- Objectives
- Intended outcomes
- Overview of Workshops in the Series

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Objectives
- Intended Outcomes
- Workshops of the Leading Edge (optional)

Coloured construction paper, markers, scissors, tape and glue

PURPOSE:

1. To introduce participants to each other and to facilitator.
2. To clarify participants' expectations and respond to questions/concerns.
3. To establish norms for group process.
4. To outline the objectives and intended outcomes for the program.

2a

MEGA Objectives

1. To provide participants with specific knowledge, pro-active attitudes, tangible tools and skills to support their transitions into the workplace.

2. To enable participants to reflect on, personalize and integrate their career experiences.

3. To initiate a conscious journey which will result in a greater sense of purpose, personal career direction and supports for success.

1. Introductions/Ice Breaker

The purpose of most ice breakers is to allow participants to become acquainted in a relatively non-threatening way. One of the main objectives of the *Leading Edge* program is to help participants understand the connection between their own abilities and strengths and their competitive edge in the labour market. This particular ice breaker activity offers a way for participants to begin thinking about how they see themselves in relation to others and, in turn, how they represent themselves to the world (i.e. their network and potential employers).

Materials

Have enough sheets of coloured construction paper available for each participant to select their favourite colour. The paper will be folded in half to produce a tent that they can write their name on and face out to the rest of the group. In addition to the paper, provide participants with coloured markers, glue and tape so that they have a variety of materials from which to choose.

Ask participants to create a name tag for themselves that includes their own "personal logo". This logo should reflect them – their interests, abilities, goals and desires. Ask them to think about capturing themselves in a design that would make others curious to learn more about them. To help get their creative juices flowing, ask them to think of words that best describe them and create an image that reflects those key words. Some participants may feel that they don't have the talent to draw a logo. Be sure to underline that they are not expected to create a great work of art. The purpose of the exercise is not its artistic value. Rather, the purpose is to begin thinking about how they might convey a small snapshot of themselves to someone else.

Provide participants with 10-15 minutes to make their name tag/logo. After this time, have each participant introduce themselves (name, where they are from, etc.) and explain their logos.

Note to facilitator: It is important that you participate in this exercise as well. In order to foster collaborative and open climate in the group, it is critical that you make yourself knowable when you are asking the participants to share themselves and their experiences.

OUTCOMES

1. Getting the "Big Picture" into Focus

   - making sense of what is being said about the future labour market;
   - making sense of your own labour market research;
   - getting to the bottom line of what employers are looking for in new hires;
   - learning how to "sniff" for opportunities in the labour market.

2. Turning the Camera on Yourself: Finding Your Leading Edge

   - determining how the "Big Picture" relates to you;
   - getting yourself into focus – knowing what you do best and letting employers/ customers know about it;
   - building your career development tool kit;
   - turning your career goals into a plan for action.

Debrief

Invite participants to share any reactions to the activity. What, if anything, stood out for them? Are there any observations about the group experience? In closing, explain that this ice breaker is one way to look at how we represent ourselves to the world, who we are and where our passions lie. Self-awareness and the ability to use that awareness in self-marketing are both critical components of career development.

The *Leading Edge* program explores how the world of work is constantly changing and looking at why it is more important than ever to be able to effectively market yourself.

Thank the group for their creativity and willingness to share their logos and, in so doing, a little of themselves with the rest of the group.

2. Objectives and Outcomes of the *Leading Edge Series*

Depending on how you structure the delivery of this program, it is important to convey to participants the overall "big picture" objective or the "so what?" of the *Leading Edge* program. This is particularly critical if you intend to deliver the full workshop series. Even if you are only delivering one session, however, it is important to create a context within which participants see the session's contribution to their broader career development.

Take a few minutes to walk participants through the following MEGA Objectives and the intended outcomes of the *Leading Edge* (listed below). Both the objectives and outcomes should be listed on flip chart and posted throughout the program so that participants can refer to them as needed.

MEGA Objective

1. To provide participants with specific knowledge, pro-active attitudes, tangible tools and skills to support their transitions into the workplace.

2. To enable participants to reflect on, personalize and integrate their career experiences.

3. To initiate a conscious journey which will result in a greater sense of purpose, personal career direction and supports for success.

Intended Outcomes

The outcomes for participants who complete the *Leading Edge* fall broadly into the two following categories:

1. Getting the "Big Picture" into Focus

   - making sense of what is being said about the future labour market;
   - making sense of your own labour market research;
   - getting to the bottom line of what employers are looking for in new hires;
   - learning how to "sniff" for opportunities in the labour market.

2. Turning the Camera on Yourself: Finding Your Leading Edge

   - determining how the "Big Picture" relates to you;
   - getting yourself into focus -- knowing what you do best and letting employers/ customers know about it;
   - building your career development tool kit;
   - turning your career goals into a plan for action.

After you have walked through the program objectives, set aside time to answer questions based on the objectives and outcomes of the program and to explore with participants the extent to which they match their own learning expectations.

Provide an overview of the following 6 Leading Edge Workshop Themes:

6 Workshops of the Leading Edge

- *Setting the Stage: The Changing World of Work*

  To clarify what's happening in the world of work and apply that understanding to personal career development as well as begin to record career journeys through portfolio compilation;

- *Recognizing Your Leading Edge*

  To initiate a shift from traditional job search (looking for a job by promoting your experience, degree or diploma) to self-marketing (identifying and creating opportunities for work by promoting your skills, abilities and strengths);

- *Powerful Résumé Writing*

  To maximize the effectiveness of this key component of the work search/marketing strategy;

- *Pro-active Work Search Tools*

  To build skills to support non-traditional work search techniques (such as information interviewing, networking and proposal writing);

- *Your Leading Edge in Action*

  To practice targeted résumé writing and interview skills and to introduce the use of professional portfolios;

- *Consolidation: Planning the Next Steps of the Journey*

  To reflect on program learning and to integrate labour market information and self-awareness into a personally meaningful sense of career direction/purpose and into a concrete plan of action.

WORKSHOP: THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

- The Current World of Work
- High Five Career Development Messages
- Structure of the Labour Market
- The Changing Workplace
- Portfolio Building

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead

- High Five Messages
- List of New Economy Drivers
- Structure of Labour Market
- The Pyramid to Diamond Workplace

PURPOSE:

1. To understand career development in the context of today's world of work;
2. To connect the relevance of the High Five Career Development Messages to the changing labour market;
3. To present a structure of the labour market that identifies factors influencing labour market change and how they relate to career building
4. To introduce portfolio building as a career journey archive and to orient participants to effectively organize their own portfolio.

7a

THE HIGH 5
CAREER DEVELOPMENT MESSAGES

- ▲ Change is Constant
- ❤ Follow your Heart
- ○ Focus on the Journey
- ? Stay Learning
- ⌂ Be an Ally Access your Allies
- ✷ Believe in Yourself

1. The Current World of Work

Introduce this section drawing on the following text:

A few of the words used to describe our current economy and labour market are: change, rapid and new. Twenty years ago, there wasn't a demand for a program like the *Leading Edge*. Full-time jobs were plentiful and the school-to-work transition was much easier than it is today. So, what has changed?

Over the past decade, there has been a fundamental shift in the world of work. Many of the workplace conditions and employer expectations have changed. For students, in particular, many of the "rules for success" don't apply anymore.

In the past, it was widely believed that if you went to school and got the "right" diploma or degree, then you could count on obtaining a full time, "good" job. If you had one career goal for life, you were considered focused and ambitious; whereas being flexible and uncertain was only for those "flaky bohemian-types" in the Faculty of Fine Arts. Ten years ago you were your degree (*ex. "I am a MBA"*) and experience was something you gained only after you graduated and (usually immediately) got your first full-time job.

Today, your degree or diploma does not guarantee a job. Having a single occupation for life is rare. In fact, most of us can expect to change jobs every 3-5 years and to have jobs in 6-10 different occupations/fields over the span of our career. Experts say that many of the "jobs" of the 21st century haven't even been invented yet. With this amount of mobility and with the enormous impact of technology and globalization on jobs, predicting our future career path is increasingly difficult.

In many ways, the current generation of graduates are the "front-line" -- the first group of young people facing a very different labour market than that faced by their parents. Today, the transition from school-to-work is complicated by the pace of change in today's labour market and the competitive clirnate of the labour force. Many young people find themselves trying to sort out the differences between the beliefs and expectations of their parents and their own experience attempting to enter the labour market. It can be overwhelming trying to live up to expectations that may not be realistic while struggling to cope with a highly competitive and ever-changing labour market.

Ask participants to share some of the messages that they received (perhaps still receive) about work. Answers might include:

- just get a job;
- go to university and everything will be OK;
- you better stop drifting and get focused – decide what you want to "be";
- decide early what you want to be and focus all your academic efforts towards that goal;
- if you work hard and are loyal to your employer, you'll move ahead;
- get a good résumé, send it everywhere and it will pay off;
- be practical and go after a job that will pay well and provide security.

How we manage the world of work is fundamentally influenced by our beliefs and the messages we carry around in our heads.

2. High Five Career Development Messages

From: *Engage and Engage Workshop Leader's Guide by the Centre for Career Development Innovation (Concordia College, Alberta: Human Resources Development Canada, 1989)*

The following are six messages that form the basis of a program called Engage. The purpose of the program, as the title suggests, is to motivate young people to become "engaged" and to take control of their own career development. The messages are what many youth, parents and career helpers have come to believe is true about career development today. Originally, there were five messages (hence, the "High Five"). When a sixth message was added, the title remained since the "High Six" doesn't quite work.

Show High Five Messages on flip chart or overhead.

9a

HIGH 5 MESSAGE	
1. What does this really mean to you?	3. What skills/attitudes will help?
2. What are the risks/ challenges of this message?	4. How might you act on this message in your life?

Take time to talk about each career development message. Use the following points to guide discussion as you walk through each message:

- ***Change is Constant***
  We are constantly changing. Our world is constantly changing. Say goodbye to the old idea that you must pick an occupation and stick to it. Many of the jobs of the 21st century haven't been invented yet. Adaptability could soon be the most important skill to have, both inside the workplace and out.

- ***Follow Your Heart***
  Find out what you want. Go after what is really important to you. Let your dreams shape your goals. Use the energy your dreams give you to help you learn the skills and take the risks you need to take to make those dreams — or any part of them — a reality.

- ***Focus on the Journey***
  Life is not a destination. Getting there is actually much more than half the fun — which is perfect, because as you evolve and life evolves around you, the place you thought you were heading may not look so enticing any more. Or, you may have decided you'd rather go off in another direction. Or to somewhere else that hasn't even shown up on your map yet. There's a big difference between having a career direction and committing to one goal for life.

- ***Keep Learning***
  You don't stop growing just because you haven't gotten any taller. You don't stop learning after you leave school. There are opportunities for learning and growth all around you. Inner space is truly the final frontier.

- ***Access Your Allies***
  There are people out there in your family, school and community whom you respect and trust. They can't dance the dance for you, but they can help you figure out how to do it for yourself.

[The above message were adapted from the Engage magazine *Your Life*.] A sixth message was added to the Engage program, based on field work with youth, parents and teachers.

- ***Believe in Yourself***
  Finally, always believe in yourself. Believe that what's deep down inside is something really worthwhile, in both good times and bad. Trust in your abilities to make it and know that inside you're O.K. no matter what happens.

3. Group Exercise: Personalizing the High Five
(60 minutes)

Adapted from: *Engage Workshop Leaders' Guide*

This exercise reinforces the "High Five" messages by encouraging participants to relate the messages to their own experience and to determine concrete strategies for bringing the messages to life.

In plenary, invite participants to answer the following questions for one message:

Focus on the Journey: (We suggest doing this as a large group because it is the most difficult message to contextualize).

1. What does this really mean to you?
2. What are the risks/challenges of focussing on the journey?
3. What skills/attitudes will help you to focus on the journey?

Encourage participants to contribute a range of responses to each question.

Have participants, as a large group, brainstorm ways to realize the message "Focus on the Journey." Participants may say: we could learn more about ourselves to determine our interests, values and beliefs; we could think about how new habits now will help in the future; we can look at our options now to see if there are better ways to do things, etc.

Break the participants into five groups. Assign one of the remaining High Five message to each group. Provide them with a flip chart sheet (one for each group) with the following questions:

1. What does this really mean to you?
2. What are the risks/challenges of this message?
3. What skills/attitude will help?
4. How might you act on this message in your life?

11a

"DRIVERS OF THE NEW ECONOMY"

1. Information
2. Globalization
3. Technology
4. Service Sector
5. Small Business

Have the participants answer the 3 questions and brainstorm actions they can take to act on their message. After 30 minutes in small group, have each group present their ideas to the larger group.

Debrief

Conduct a brief discussion, inviting participants to share their reactions/comments. Conclude the exercise by summarizing for participants the importance of personalizing the High Five messages and their application to the career journey.

4. Brainstorm Current Climate of Work

The High Five Messages reflect a fundamental shift in how we view work. This session will focus on deepening our understanding of the changes that are occurring in the labour market and in the workplace and on identifying the implications of these changes on labour market entry and opportunity.

To set the context for examining the current world of work, take 5 minutes to brainstorm with the group some of the changes in the labour market that they know of or have experienced. Record their responses on a flip chart.

Answers could include:

- downsizing;
- youth unemployment;
- labour market changes affecting everyone;
- increasing growth of small business;
- university and college degrees ≠ jobs;
- new work alternatives (job sharing, multi-tracking, contract workers)

Draw on the following text to present the "drivers" of the new economy:

> Current research would indicate that there are at least 5 key factors that are contributing to today's labour market conditions. The following can be considered the "drivers" of the new economy (write on the following headings on flip chart or overhead):

12a

STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET
Technology
Environment
Social Trends
Education & Training
ME
Economic Trends
Composition of the Labour Market
Occupational Structures

1. **Information** - Never before has there been such a proliferation of available information. People can access information from around the world directly via the Internet. Whereas the labour market was at one time dominated by physical labour, today it is driven by information and knowledge. Many argue that "knowledge is power." This may be more true now than ever.

2. **Globalization** - Borders are blurring in many ways as trade agreements and communication links connect people across continents. Technology is allowing us to enter into foreign worlds and foreign markets as never before.

3. **Technology** - New innovations in technology are changing the face of work. Today, computer literacy is a basic requirement in almost all occupations. How we live and how we work is changing dramatically as a result of the high-tech industry.

4. **Service Sector** - Tremendous growth is occurring in the service sector. The sector has expanded far beyond its traditional definition (which typically included low-paying cashiers, counter attendants and sales people). Today, the service sector includes information and knowledge, health and education workers.

5. **Small Business** - Recent reports would indicate that the dominant labour market growth is occurring in small businesses. As large corporations downsize, many workers are starting their own enterprises, joining with others to form partnerships and creative alliances, and/or seeking to work in more flexible ways for smaller firms.

Compare this list with the "drivers" that participants have brain-stormed. Note any similarities and make connections where possible.

Brainstorm with participants any additional factors that they would identify as particularly affecting a young person's labour market prospects. Are there any additional youth-specific "drivers"?

Answers might include:

- knowledge is increasingly valued;
- shortage of workers anticipated at the turn of the century (retirement of "baby boomers" resulting in increased opportunities);
- non-standard work & living alternatives;
- high-tech skills.

5. Structure of the Labour Market

The first step in understanding how opportunities for work open up in the labour market is to understand how the labour market functions. Conceptually, it isn't as complicated as it might seem. In brainstorming the "drivers", participants have probably identified the key components that affect labour market change. The "drivers" are simply current examples of the labour market in action.

Walk through the seven broad components that affect the labour market, drawing on the text that follows. Make any connections between the seven components, the "drivers" and the brainstormed lists. Encourage participants to offer additional examples of each component.

- social/political trends;
- economic trends;
- occupational structure;
- composition of the labour force;
- education and training;
- technology; and
- environment.

Social/Political Trend

A social trend is based on increased public awareness, usually via mass media, and a change in opinions and values. Political trends often interact with social trends to shape the public's political and ideological inclinations which, in turn, affect consumer preferences. Public opinion influences the demand for goods and services and for their specific standards/ qualities. The labour market will respond by creating opportunities to produce those goods, services and standards in order to meet buyer demand.

For example, an increasing number of couples are requesting birthing centres staffed by midwives, allowing for natural childbirth and the involvement of the father. A number of factors have contributed to this trend (including the feminist movement, a reaction to the medicalization of birthing, and shifts in attitude related to quality of life). As a result, demands now exist for certified midwives, new facilities, different equipment, educational material, new legislation and licensing.

In terms of the "drivers", both the proliferation of information and globalization are socio-political trends. (You'll note as we move through each component that they are not completely discrete – many influences overlap and interact with each other to create labour market change).

Economic trends

The economy, or an economic trend, can have an enormous influence on industry and, thus, its ability to compete for sales or for qualified employees. For example, a trade agreement such as NAFTA both expands the markets for Canadian exports and allows the import of cheaper or perhaps more technologically advanced products. This can affect such things as prices, wages, the relocation of industries and, therefore, opportunity.

Occupational structures

There has always been a division of labour in society based on which jobs have the highest status, which have the highest or lowest pay, which require extensive training and which are similar enough to be grouped together. A formal occupational classification system, the CCDO (Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations), was developed in 1971 and the NOC (National Occupational Classification) replaced it in 1993.

Such classification systems allow the collection of occupational data through the census, labour force surveys and other research. These data can then be used to make occupational projections, identify training needs and track growth sectors. They can help workers identify career paths by learning about occupational mobility and skill levels. This way, a worker can determine what type of occupation would match their skills and what additional upgrading or new skills training would be necessary.

The expansion of the service sector is an example of a current shift in occupational structures. As it grows, new occupations are developing and occupations are being re-classified. With today's pace of change in the labour market, publications such as the NOC are struggling to remain current.

Composition of the labour force

Demographics are a key factor in shaping Canada's labour market. A variety of demographic factors (e.g., birth rate, age composition of the population, work force participation rates and rates of immigration) can be directly related to the supply of workers. For example, Canada's birth rate is below replacement level and the population is aging. There is some question as to whether the working age population can maintain the existing levels of social services in the decades ahead. We have all heard about the concerns about pension plans and social services for a greying population may have an impact on opportunities in geriatrics, financial services and/or family services.

Education and training

For companies to keep pace with the rapidly changing economy, they depend on education and training programs to graduate workers with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. Students these days need to know that, although a good education can prepare them for employment, lifelong learning is an important part of any career as the labour market changes.

The need for skilled workers puts a demand on educational institutions but there is usually a time lag of three to four years between the increase in the demand and the ability of a training program to meet this demand. Recessionary times could be a natural time for training because production demands are low. This, however, would involve long-range upgrading and training strategies

and budgets. A key question that young job seekers need to consider when they search for training is whether the school is connected and current with the demands in a field.

Technology

We are all aware of how technology has changed over the years. This has been identified as one of the major "drivers" in today's labour market. What changes in technology have you noted in your lifetime? (e.g., automatic banking machines, fax machines, robotics, e-mail etc.) Changing technology can be included in any discussion of the other six components of the labour market. The way we use technology to work from our homes and to connect with the rest of the world, for example, impacts public opinion (social trends), restructuring and global competition (economic trends). Technology also has had an important impact on occupational structures, causing the disappearance of certain jobs, the emergence of new occupations and shifts in work alternatives (such as home-based business and virtual companies). Education and training are, of course, impacted as upgrading and new skills are required to keep up with technology.

Environment

Finally, we are increasingly aware of the impact of the environment on the labour market. Shifts in climate and our management of natural resources affect the supply and demand of products and services across many sectors. In Canada, significant shifts in the logging and fishing industries can be linked to the effect of the environment.

So, what does all of this have to do with opportunities for ME? The labour market components and some of the current "drivers" may seem a bit obscure and disconnected to day-to-day reality. For example, it may be hard to see how globalization has a direct impact on my job prospects. We function within the labour market, however, and are all active members of the labour force (whether we're currently working for pay or not). The "big picture" can provide important clues to the direction in which a specific area of interest is moving. While no one can predict the future, if you understand how

17a

STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY

1. How has this "driver" affected each component of the labour market?

2. In your groups, choose a field of interest (it may be an area that one of your group members is interested in pursuing). What is the overall impact of the changes identified in Question # 1 on this field?

3. For each group member, how do the changes identified in Question # 1 affect your own opportunities for finding work? Do they limit jobs in your field? Do they create any opportunities that you might not have thought of before?

the labour market functions and how current trends impact occupations, then you can begin to "sniff" for future opportunities and make some educated guesses. This ability to project possible opportunities will give you an edge over the "wait and wonder" work search technique.

6. "If Cows Could Talk..." Activity

For many of us, without Ph.D.'s in Economics, the labour market can seem difficult to understand. The purpose of this activity is to bring the labour market down to earth with an out of this world example. It helps participants become more familiar with the structure of the labour market by applying a "what if" situation. In this activity, participants will be asked to stretch their imaginations to brainstorm what might happen to the world of work if cows could talk.

Introduce this activity using the following text:

> You're at your favourite coffee shop having a cup of java with your friend Betsy who, no pun intended, is a real cow!! How is it possible to be speaking with a Holstein? New technological advances in "La La Land" have now made it possible for cows to talk. As a result of this invention, enormous changes are taking place. What are these changes? Stretch your imagination, put on your Astute Knowledge of the Structure of the Labour Market Hat, take the seven components of the labour market and think of the impact that cows talking would have on the labour market.

In the large group, use the seven components of the labour market and brainstorm how each would be effected by cows talking. Then, have participants think of all the opportunities that could result from cows talking - the sky's the limit!!

Debrief

Invite participants to discuss their reaction/comments to the activity. This exercise is a fun example of how to search for and/or create opportunity in the labour market. Although the example was fictional, the same process can be used with realistic examples. Imagination and creativity are important tools when exploring work opportunities in today's labour market.

7. Structure of the Labour Market Activity

Handout: Structure of the Labour Market Activity

The following activity moves from the imaginary land where cows talk to real "drivers" of the current labour market. Using real examples, participants will apply the same process to the seven labour market components and will be challenged to think critically about opportunity.

Divide participants into 5 small groups. Assign each group one of the 5 "drivers" of the new economy. Provide the following instructions:

Work in your groups to answer the following questions with respect to the assigned "driver":

1. How has this "driver" affected each component of the labour market?

2. In your groups, choose a field of interest (it may be an area that one of your group members is interested in pursuing). What is the overall impact of the changes identified in Question #1 on this field?

3. For each group member, how do the changes identified in Question #1 affect your own opportunities for finding work? Do they limit jobs in your field? Do they create any opportunities that you might not have thought of before?

Before having participants move into their groups, you will want to walk through the questions using an example. You may wish to provide an example from your own experience or draw on the following:

Example: Assigned "driver": Service Sector

1. *How has this "driver" affected each component of the labour market?*

   A few examples are:

   - Social/Political Trends
     - increased political attention to issues related to health/education
     - shift in public perception and increased attribution of status to service sector positions

   - Economic Trends
     - opening of international trade agreements to include consultation services;
     - increased demand for services to services (ex. beginning to see a proliferation of firms offering tailored services to other service-providing firms)

   - Occupational Structures
     - new occupational titles are emerging within the service sector;
     - NOC has major emphasis on service sector codes;
     - proliferation of "consultant" as job title.

   - Composition of the Labour Force
     - new Canadians and foreign service providers are increasingly active in the service sector here and abroad;
     - major export of Canadian consultants.

   - Education and Training
     - increased number of college programs focused on service sector preparation;
     - technical programs are beginning to include training in service (ex. customer relations).

- Technology
  - proliferation of Internet services (both direct and indirect);
  - on-line counselling, consultation, teaching, diagnostic services, etc.

- Environment
  - proliferation of environmental consulting services (ex. assistance to ensure that your firm is "green");
  - recycling services in most cities/towns;
  - eco-tourism booming.

2. *In your groups, choose a field of interest (it may be an area that one of your group members is interested in pursuing). What is the overall impact of the changes identified in Question #1 on your chosen field of interest?*

   If my area of interest is counselling, a few sample issues to consider are:

   - While I don't know enough to be sure that counselling is a growing field (I'd need to do more research to be sure), I do know that it is a component of a growing sector. I may want to explore the possibility of providing counselling services to other firms/workers within the service sector (ex. helping hospital staff cope with increased work loads and/or downsizing).

   - Technology is affecting service delivery – As a counsellor, I can use the Internet more than ever before to help clients access a much wider range of practical information. At the same time, however, the proliferation of information means that many clients (and counsellors) feel overwhelmed and don't know how to zero in on the most relevant and accurate information. I may want to hone my technical, research and critical thinking skills so that I could help my clients to better

navigate the Internet and make sense of important information. I may also want to explore the possibility of using the Internet in service delivery or in marketing my counselling services.

- The composition of the labour force is changing. With an aging baby boomer population, I may want to explore retirement counselling and/or other services to seniors.

- Counselling and consultation have considerable overlap with respect to the core skills that are required. I may want to explore opportunities in providing consultation services within the service sector.

3. *For each group member, how do the changes identified in Question #1 affect your own opportunities for finding work? Do they limit jobs in your field? Do they create any opportunities that you might not have thought of before?*

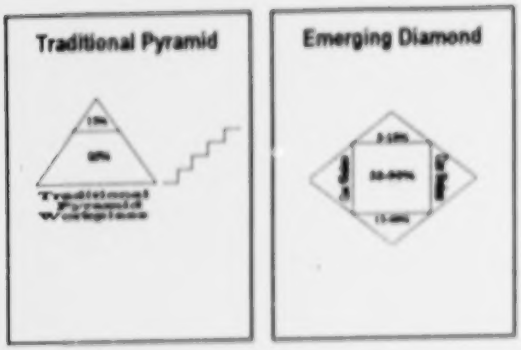
   Possible opportunities for me to explore:

   - Counselling and/or consultation services offered to firms within the service sector. For example, if I had a strong interest in international development, I may want to explore:

     1. providing counselling services to staff preparing for/returning from overseas postings;
     2. providing consultation services to assist service providing firms working in international arenas to deliver high quality service; and/or
     3. provide counselling services to new Canadians and/or to Canadians working overseas.

Obviously, these are just a few possibilities. The generation of possible opportunities would be guided by personal interest, skills and experience and any of the above would need to be researched fully before they could be confirmed as viable.

22a



The purpose of the activity is not to presume that imagination and creativity alone will guarantee opportunity. It does, however, underscore the value to thinking critically about the labour market and its current trends. By projecting current trends into future possibilities, new opportunities can be identified for further exploration. This ability to "sniff the future" is a competitive advantage.

Check in with participants to ensure that the activity instructions are clear and that they are prepared to proceed. Allow 30 minutes for small groups to work through the 3 questions for their assigned "driver". You may wish to circulate among the groups to answer questions and provide guidance as necessary.

Debrief

Invite groups to present a summary of their findings to the full groups (max. 5 minutes per group). Encourage participants to note similarities/differences between the findings of different groups. Allow for plenary discussion of participants reactions to and insights from the activity.

Encourage participants to take time following the session to complete the activity individually, focussing on a field that is of personal interest. They may also wish to try to develop a habit of reading the newspaper within this critical thinking context. Does the headline/article relate to any of the current "drivers"? Does it impact the labour market in any way? Can they project into the future to image the longer range implication? Does it have any impact on their own field of interest? Does their analysis of the headline/article hint at any emerging opportunities within their field?

Thinking in these terms can lead to opportunity awareness/creation and can provide participants with a "head start" in accessing new and emerging opportunities for work.

8. The Changing Workplace

Lecturette and Group Activity

Given the nature of the labour market and its current "drivers", it is important to consider how the workplace has been affected. If the labour market has changed, it is fair to assume that the workplace has also changed. And, if this is true, you can be sure that the "rules of entry" have change with it!

There are many different theories and models to explain the current state of the workplace. One model that we have found useful is that of Canadian, Bill Charland. He suggests that we are in the midst of a fundamental shift in the nature of the workplace. He uses visual images to illustrate the transition from a traditional "pyramid" to our emerging "diamond" workplace.

Present Charland's Model of the Changing Workplace

*The Big Picture: Pyramids to Diamonds [Lecturette and Group Activity - **Adapted from:** Feller, R. "Redefining 'Career' during the Work Revolution" in Career Transitions in Turbulent Times. Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS, 1996. Publication based on Charland, WA. Career Shifting: Starting Over in a Changing Economy. Holbrook, MA: Adams, 1993.*

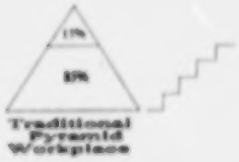
You may wish to use 2 flip charts, drawing one figure on each. This enables you to graphically illustrate characteristics of each and demonstrate our current position of transition between the two models. Begin by presenting the pyramid. Note that Charland suggests that, up until fairly recently, the workplace was similar to a pyramid. In the pyramid, there was lots of opportunity for entry and workers moved "up the ladder" in a predictable progression. There was a real distinction between the "white collar" professionals/ managers and the "blue collar" workers. Provide enough introduction so that participants understand the image and can contribute to the discussion. As much as possible, draw on group input to continue the description of the pyramid and to introduce the emerging diamond workplace. Under the pyramid, you may ask the following questions to elicit group contributions:

- What words described the "pyramid" workplace?
- What did employers value?
- How was success defined?
- Where were blue collar workers? White collar workers?
- How did workers "get in"? How did they "move ahead"?
- Where were the challenges? Where were the opportunities?

You may then ask the same questions for the emerging diamond. Supplement group input by drawing on the following text:

Characteristics of Pyramid and Diamond

Traditional Pyramid



Emerging Diamond

• Thick at the bottom; narrow at the top • Intelligence and talent at the top • Pay your dues and you'll advance • Loyalty pays off • Skill requirements are clear • Lots of chances to enter at the bottom; lots of chances to stay there too • Hierarchical -- Specialists abound • Decision-making at the top and in the hands of very few • Considerable differentiation between "blue collar" labourers and "white collar" professionals. • Focus is on Occupations/Job Titles	• Thick in the middle; thin at the bottom and top • Fewer at the top, but big money is there • Advancing has been replaced by moving laterally through learning • Big square is knowledge and service-based. Huge opportunity for self-starters and risk-takers • Constricted base means very limited opportunity for low skill/inexperienced -- Assumption of basic skills. • Fast paced and dynamic -- Generalists who are transferable/mobile will succeed in the highly competitive square. • Decision-making in teams • Crumbling differentiation - "aqua collar" workers are emerging as tasks expand and distinctions blur • Focus is on SKILLS - Charland suggests that if we focus on learning and building skills, the occupations will take care of themselves.

Note that much of our dominant culture and media continues to suggest that "up remains the way to go". "Climbing the corporate ladder" and "living to work" may, however, be messages whose times -- at least for now -- has passed.

We are in the midst of transition. In some communities, the pyramid remains, but generally, the diamond is emerging.

Reflection

Encourage participants to reflect on the labour market that they see around them. Do they see this shift in their own community, in the places that they have volunteered or worked in? How would they characterize their current labour market?

Conclusion

Draw the conclusion that, generally speaking, the number of workers who can remain employed with minimal employability skills has diminished dramatically in Canada. Charland suggests that the diamond is a labour market with both challenge and opportunity. He urges young job seekers to connect with learning organizations -- Take any position in a firm that invests in the development of its employees. Non-standard work alternatives will likely be the norm rather than the exception in the diamond. Quality, service, efficiency and accountability will drive success – Worker will be increasingly responsible for their own "self-marketing" and for proving their value to potential employers. Finally, Charland suggests that skills are central to success in the diamond. He urges us to focus on SKILLS, and let occupations take care of themselves.

9. Portfolio Building

A portfolio is a pro-active work search tool. It is also a personalized "archive" of our career development. The portfolio is introduced in this first workshop of the *Leading Edge* series because it is intended to be a reservoir that records the learning that takes place throughout the program. There are many opportunities in the program for participants to add to and build their portfolio. All handouts for the workshop series should be included as well as other pieces that result from their completion of activities.

Draw on the following text to introduce the development of a portfolio as a record of one's career development:

> In the "diamond" world of work, you need to develop more than a résumé for your work search. Employers increasingly want to know not only what degree or diploma you hold, but also what you can do (your skills). In interviews, employers want evidence of your skills and accomplishments. One way to demonstrate and provide this information is to compile a professional portfolio.

A well-laid out and prepared portfolio can give you a leading edge in today's labour market. It captures your work, achievements, skills and knowledge. Building a portfolio is not new. Artists, for example, have always kept portfolios as a way of showing the range, quality and versatility of their work. For an artist to enroll in an art school or to obtain work, they need a well-developed portfolio. In today's changing world of work, professional employment portfolios are becoming more popular. Portfolios are now often required in highly competitive fields such as teaching.

A portfolio can give you an edge in today's labour market because it:

1. sets you apart;
2. shows your unique and marketable qualities; and
3. supports what you tell the employer by demonstrating what you have to offer.

A portfolio is also a place to record your career journey, to journal and to reflect upon your learning. It is your personal and professional record of your career journey. Because it contains personal information, you would not give it to an employer in its entirety. You select pieces from it that are applicable to a specific job, contract or promotion and present materials from it at an interview or meeting when appropriate.

Ask the group to take a moment and think of items to include in their portfolios. In plenary, ask participants to share their ideas. Record their suggestions on a flip chart or overhead. Ideas could include:

- résumé
- samples of writing
- transcripts, certificates, diplomas
- sample of work from their experience or learning (e.g. a photo of the children where you were the camp counsellor)
- photos and video tapes of your work
- memberships

- letters of recommendation
- brochures/thumbnail sketch of your skill highlights (one-pager)
- evidence of employability skills (e.g. description of positive outcome(s) that resulted from using skill(s))
- business card

10. Portfolio in Action

Referring to the group's list, ask participants to take a blank sheet of paper and think about everything that they want to include in their portfolio. Have them think about the evidence of their own skills that they have available now and to consider what items they need to develop. Ask them to consider how they will organize their portfolios. As a marketing piece, what "look" would they want to give it? Would they include their logos, for example?

Give them 20 minutes to make a list of everything they want to include and their plan for organizing, compiling and stylizing this information.

Debrief

In plenary, invite participants to share their ideas for structuring their portfolio material. Refer back to the brain-stormed list of items to include. Add any new items that individual members identified in their own planning. Post this list and encourage participants to add to it throughout the workshop series.

Note to facilitator: You may want to revisit this list at the end of each workshop and add pieces from the workshop to the list. You might also want to reexamine the list with the group during the Consolidation workshop as a way to reconnect the pieces of the *Leading Edge* .

Emphasize that, since change is constant, a critical part of the portfolio building process is to revisit your portfolio from time to time to ensure that it is up-to-date, that your references are current and are informed about any developments in your career.

11. Closure of Setting the Stage: The Changing World of Work

Close the session by inviting participants to reflect on the purpose of this session. Have them brainstorm all of the skills, knowledge and attitudes that they think were being developed through this session. What outcomes were we trying to build?

List them in 3 columns on a flip chart and post in a visible location. Ask them to reflect on their own learning over the session in order to identify the critical skills, knowledge and attitudes that were addressed.

Examples of their responses might include:

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
• labour market is fundamentally different today • structure of the labour market • "drivers" of the new economy • skills and experiences in one area are transferable to other areas	• self marketing • lateral thinking • creativity • communication • "sniffing the future"	• career transitions are normal • pro-active about and seeking/creating opportunities for learning and work • accountability (ie. demonstrate skills) • multi-potentiality

As an optional extension, you may ask participants to journal their reactions to the session. Participants could write about the key skills, knowledge and/or attitudes that changed or developed for them, highlighting the key learnings that they're taking away with them as a result of their participation in the session.

In conclusion, encourage participants to carry with them:

- an attitude of critical thinking as they consider labour market information;
- an awareness of their own skills and the transferability of those skills across work options;
- a broad perspective on opportunity identification and/or creation.

DEPENDABLE STRENGTHS

"Skills, talents, and other qualities that have been developed over one's lifetime, from childhood to the present, and which, when used in combinations, enable one to do certain thing well, with a sense of satisfaction and pride" (Forster, 1989)

WORKSHOP: RECOGNIZING YOUR LEADING EDGE

- Dependable Strengths
- Charland's Work Analysis
- Continuum of Work Alternatives
- Link to Self-Marketing

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Definition Dependable Strengths
- Instructions for Self-Marketing Activity
- Continuum of Work Alternatives

List of skills for references

Coloured construction paper, markers, flip chart paper, scissors, tape/glue

PURPOSE:

1. To identify career-related strengths and skills by analyzing past accomplishments and how they were achieved.
2. To articulate these strengths and skills, so that they can be drawn on for interviews, résumés and self-marketing.
3. To "own" personal strengths and skills, acknowledging and taking pride in one's capacity to contribute to the labour market.
4. To develop an "entrepreneurial spirit" to market one's self in the world of work

1. Introduction Strengths and Assets

Introduce the importance of strengths identification, drawing from the following text:

> We often have a lot of difficulty recognizing strengths that we have developed, even those held in high regard by others. Many of us are often better at recognizing our limitations and mistakes, while minimizing our assets. It is important to have opportunities to recognize assets and to learn to make these assets work best in career planning and career action. This section provides opportunities to identify strengths and skills and to label them so that we can present them to potential employers. Some skills are developed to perform a specific task. Having "technical" skills can he a real asset in the labour market. More and more, however, employers are recognizing the value of "transferable" skills -- skills that can be applied to performing many different tasks.
>
> For example, it is very useful to know how to fix a car engine (technical skill). With advances in the industry, however, techniques are changing rapidly. It is increasingly important to have the flexibility to learn new techniques and the adaptability to translate past knowledge into new applications. Flexibility and adaptability are examples of employability skills that are transferable across many occupations.

2. Dependable Strengths

Adapted from: *Constructivist Career Counselling*

We all carry around "transferable" skills that we draw on to perform all kinds of activities. Often, they are so much a part of who we are that we take them for granted. These are our "dependable strengths".

Present the following definition of "dependable strengths":

Definition

"Skills, talents, and other qualities that have been developed over one's lifetime, from childhood to the present, and which, when used in combinations, enable one to do certain thing well, with a sense of satisfaction and pride" (Forster, 1989).

One of the most predictable interview questions, when being screened for employment or training, is "what strengths do you bring?" Many find this to be a <u>really</u> challenging question to answer. It is, therefore, important not just to be aware of your strengths and assets but to be able to describe them in ways which enhance career opportunities and promote yourself.

Note that the identification of strengths and assets is not achieved as a result of a single activity. It is recommended that a series of training opportunities be structured over time so that participants can:

- practice skills; benefits from coaching and receiving feedback from other participants concerning their strengths and assets;
- examine and reflect on their work experiences and what strengths and assets they are demonstrating and being rewarded for; and
- acquire the skills of receiving, and learning from, the feedback of others.

Note that this focus on strengths and assets does not preclude the necessity to recognize and work on limitations. Usually, however, there are abundant sources of information on weaknesses and far fewer on assets.

3. Dependable Strengths Reflective Activity
(45 minutes)

Use the following as your guide in introducing this activity:

> We all use strengths and assets in our everyday activities — we just do not often recognize them as such. Standing back from our achievements and discovering <u>how</u> we accomplished them provides a window to see strengths and assets in action. If we can identify the strengths that enable us to carry out daily tasks successfully, we can begin to see which strengths we tend to draw on regularly. When these patterns become evident, this is a good indication of our strengths which are integrated and <u>dependable</u>.

This activity is one way to see the relationship between our accomplishments and our strengths/assets.

Ask participants to list three accomplishments they have experienced at some point in their lives. Explain that it is not the importance of the accomplishment that matters. Rather, encourage them to list any three things they:

- felt they did well;
- enjoyed doing;
- feel proud of.

Reinforce that it can be anything - big or small.

Ex. *I had friends over -- I had nothing in the fridge, yet I managed to put together a great meal.*

Last week at work, I was asked to use a new machine. I didn't want to at first, but I got one of my co-workers to help me and it worked out fine.

Participants then list the steps used to complete each of the accomplishments. Have them examine the steps and think about what skills were necessary to perform each step.

Handout: Employability Skills Profile

Using the Employability Skills Profile, invite them to find any matches between skills they used and those on the Profile. The idea is to see what patterns of skills emerge.

When they are finished, learners can look at the skills they have identified and consider how many of them are "familiar" — that is, are used in other areas of their lives or used on a regular basis (but perhaps unnamed or called something different). These familiar skills are *dependable strengths.*

4. Dependable Strengths Demonstration

Before moving to the next activity (Dependable Strengths Triad Activity), it is important to demonstrate the process. The activity demands active listening skills and an exclusive focus on strengths. You will want to spend sufficient time modeling and practicing before moving to the activity.

Privately ask one participant if they would be willing to tell you about one of their accomplishments in front of the group. Reinforce that this is a voluntary activity, not a requirement. Set up the room so that your chair is facing the volunteer's chair, with the other participants formed in a semi-circle facing in. Instruct the group to listen to the volunteer's story. One-half of the participants (those facing the volunteer) are asked to write down any time they hear a strength or a skill in the story. The employability skills profile is an example of the skills that participants are listening for.

Your role as facilitator will be to listen to the volunteer's story and to encourage specificity (as required) by asking open questions.

Ex: *How did you do that?*
Take me back and walk me through the steps involved?
Where did you begin? How did you get from here to there to actually achieving it?

The other half of the group (those facing you) are to write down anything you do or say that helps the volunteer tell their story.

After 10 minutes of storytelling, ask the half of the group that were listing the volunteer's strengths to share their lists. Record on flip chart all the skills identified by participants. You may wish to get a sense of which skills were identified by more than one person.

Note to facilitator: You will want to assess your group and structure this demonstration accordingly. If you have a diverse group, for example, you may wish to provide explicit instructions that each observer is to identify 3 skills so that skills lists are balanced. You may also wish to tie the stories more closely to work experiences. Use your knowledge of your participants and of group process in planning the demonstration.

Take time to check in with the volunteer. Do they recognize the skill set as their own? Reinforce that the list of skills is theirs to accept or reject – They are in control. Note that this approach is a "skills bombardment" – confronting them with the perceptions of others. This can be a useful way to identify skills that we ourselves might otherwise take for granted. Give the list to the volunteer to keep for their portfolio.

Have the other half of the group share what they observed you say/do that helped the volunteer tell their story. Push the group to be as specific as possible in their feedback. List on flip chart any concrete feedback. .

Ex: *I found it really opened the conversation when you asked her to walk through each step.*

I appreciated it when you referred back to the earlier point in the story. You said "You were overwhelmed at first, but talking it over with a friend really helped to remind you that you weren't alone". That showed me that you were really listening.

The purpose of this feedback is to reinforce with the group the important role of listening in the upcoming dependable strengths activity. You have just modelled in front of the group the process of actively listening to a story in order to draw out dependable skills and strengths.

5. Dependable Strengths Triad Activity
(60 minutes)

The group will be invited to work in triads, each taking turns as the storyteller, the listener and as an observer. Each role is important:

The storyteller is asked simply to tell their story.

The listener is asked to try to help the storyteller to be as specific and detailed as possible, drawing out the positive aspects of the story. Your modeling was intended to reinforce building rapport, using open questions, eliciting specificity and detail and most importantly, remaining positive. The listener is not meant to judge the story in any way. Their job is to actively listen.

The observer is asked to be a time keeper (20 minutes per story) and to quietly record (legibly!) all the skills and strengths they hear in the storyteller's story. Their list is presented to the storyteller after the story is finished.

Just like in the modeling, the storyteller is ultimately in control. The list is theirs to accept or reject.

After the completion of one story the members of each triad will change roles. The triads will go through 3 full cycles, so that each group member will have the opportunity to try each role. (Total 60 minutes)

Alternative Applications

You'll want to encourage participants to tell many different stories over time. This way, skill patterns emerge. There multiple ways of accessing dependable strengths. This activity can be done as an individual reflective exercise, in pairs (the listener also plays the observer role), or in larger groups with multiple observers. Stories can be unstructured (ex: anything you did well, enjoyed and feel proud of) or structured (ex: identify one accomplishment over the last week at work). You may have an unlimited skill list, or ask for a specific number of skills (ex: list 3 skills that stand out in the story). Make this activity your own and make it fit the dynamics of your group.

Encourage participants to use their portfolio or journal as a place to record their skills development. Revisit skills and strengths regularly as you continue to move through the program.

6. Introduction: Charland's Task, Skill & Trait Analysis

Draw from the following text to introduce participants to an alternative way of analyzing their accomplishments to identify skills:

> Many argue that we're the sum of our experiences. There is no doubt that our accomplishments are a rich source for skills development. Yet, often we're so preoccupied with doing that we don't take time to reflect on the learning and growth that is occurring. It's one thing to list our accomplishments on a résumé – it's quite another to be able to use our accomplishments as demonstrable proof of our skills and abilities. Like an artist carries samples of their art in their portfolio to market their talent, so too workers are increasingly expected to "prove their worth". Reflecting on accomplishments and making the critical link between experience and skill development can give a work-seeker a competitive edge in today's labour market.

Focus on Skills

Bill Charland writes about the challenges and opportunities in today's world of work. He suggests that skills lie at the core of success in work, urging us to "Focus on the skill, and the occupations will take care of themselves."

Job/Work Analysis

Charland offers a method for building your own "skills portfolio" by breaking down your past work experiences into 3 basic elements:

- the tasks performed;
- the skills required, and;
- the traits that enabled you to work effectively.

Individual Reflective Activity

Think back to your last work experience – be it full-time, part-time or volunteer. Now, imagine that when you decided to move on, you were asked to manage the hiring of your replacement. You have been asked to determine your "job description" and hire the best possible person for the job.

To prepare for this, divide a sheet of paper into 3 columns and complete the following:

1. In the first column, write down every task that your replacement would need to perform during a typical week in order to do your job really well. Add any additional special tasks that you were called upon to do.

2. In the second column, list all the skills that would be needed in order to perform these tasks well. What skills would you be looking for in your replacement?

3. Consider the traits that would make for a desirable replacement. What kind of a person would succeed in the job? Would a sociable person be preferable to one who prefers solitary work? Does the job require someone who is precise and methodical or someone who is quick-thinking and spontaneous? Imagine all the traits that you'd be looking for in your replacement and list them in the final column.

Take 15 minutes to complete your job analysis.

Debrief

In large group, invite participants to comment on the activity. How did they find the experience? Did anything stand out for them in the job/work analysis? What links can they make to their own strengths and assets? Could they make any connections between this analysis and the dependable strengths activity or the skills self-assessment?

Make the connection to critical skills needed to succeed in the emerging diamond work place. Emphasize the importance of being able to reflect on experience to identify skills.

Work seekers who are able to self-market by articulating their skills and citing specific accomplishments and experiences as demonstrable proof will have a leading edge over their competition.

Note that the information gathered here will be used in the Powerful Résumé Writing session.

SELF-MARKETING ACTIVITY

1. Share your skills. Have each group member read out their skill to the others in their group.

2. Pool your skills together to form a company. Think about the unique combination of your skills and imagine how you might come together and use this skill composite to offer product(s) and/or service(s). What would your company offer? To whom?

3. Name your company. Create a logo, slogan and/or jingle.

4. Prepare a 2 minute PR/Marketing campaign that presents your company. Make sure that you highlight your company's leading edge (its niche).

7. Link to entrepreneurial Spirit in Self-Marketing

Identifying and being able to express what we can do is critical to marketing one's self in the current world of work. Charland emphasizes that work in the diamond will come in many different shapes and sizes. Likely the minority of work will be packaged into traditional full-time permanent jobs. Rather, the following range of work options will be available:

Continuum of Work Alternatives

We already know that tremendous growth is occurring the small business/ entrepreneurial sector. This has direct implications for the skills required of new workers to access and succeed in today's labour market and it's range of workplace options. Business management, marketing, networking, self-management and an "entrepreneurial spirit" are increasingly core work skills.

There are a number of myths about entrepreneurship. The bookstores are full of futurist publications warning young people that if they don't become entrepreneurs, they won't succeed in work. In some, there are some implied messages that can end up excluding prospective enterers:

Myth #1 Entrepreneurship is genetic – you are either born an entrepreneur or not.

Entrepreneurs have a skill set that is learned, practiced and developed through training and work/life experience.

Myth #2 Entrepreneurs are independent mavericks – they do it alone by beating down the competition.

Most entrepreneurial ventures are partnerships (many form when a group of like-minded laid off employees sit around a kitchen table and move from helping each other through the grief of job loss to beginning to explore what they might do together as a next career move).

Self-Marketing Activity

The following activity is intended to bring the "entrepreneurial spirit" to life.

Distribute small pieces of coloured paper (make sure that there are 4-5 pieces of each colour) and have participants each choose one piece. Ask participants to write down one thing that they do well on their piece of paper. It can be any skill that they possess (it doesn't have to be their biggest or best). The skill does not have to be related to their current work or field of interest. Preferably, however, it should be a skill that they enjoy performing.

Once all participants have written down their skill, have them find the others in the group who have the same colour of paper as theirs. You should end up with groups of 4-5 people each.

Once they are settled in their small groups, provide the following instructions (verbally and on flip chart):

1. Share your skills. Have each group member read out their skill to the others in their group.

2. Pool your skills together to form a company. Think about the unique combination of your skills and imaging how you might come together and use this skill composite to offer products(s) and/or service(s). What would your company offer? To whom?

3. Name you company. Create a logo, slogan and/or jingle.

4. Prepare a 2 minute PR/Marketing campaign that presents your company. Make sure that you highlight your company's leading edge (its niche).

Provide 25 minutes for small groups to prepare their campaigns. Make flip chart paper, coloured paper, tape, scissors, markers and any other "props" available.

Presentation of Campaign

Open the floor to each small group to deliver their 2-minute campaign. Celebrate each group's creativity and effort.

Debrief

Ask participants to consider what skills/attitudes/knowledge they drew on in order to complete the activity. Record the list on flip chart and post it in a visible location. Make the connection between these skills and today's labour market, the diamond work place, and the continuum of work options. Note that skills such as flexibility, creativity, adaptability, and self-marketing are critical skills across ALL work alternatives. While not all workers will seek to become entrepreneurs, all will be increasingly called upon to bring an entrepreneurial spirit to their work search.

8. Closure

Note that participants have practiced 2 methods of accessing strengths and skills. Many tests exist to assess skills, abilities and work traits. While some are excellent sources, an enormous amount of insight can come from simple reflection. Unlike most tests, these active approaches enable participants to analyze and reference their job/work experience. By repeating the process, they can begin to identify patterns of skills/traits that they can rely on as their "leading edge". Participants can then use the link between those skills/traits and specific examples of demonstration in order to bring their strengths to life and prove their worth to prospective employers/clients by calling upon their "entrepreneurial spirit."

Conclude the session by inviting each participant to complete the following sentence:

"A strength that I discovered I have is _____".

If you are delivering this program sequentially, ask participants to bring a copy of their résumé, portfolio, skills inventory and other relevant documents to the next session.

WORKSHOP: POWERFUL RÉSUMÉ WRITING

- Name that Drink
- The Functional Résumé
- Career Objective
- Electronic Résumés

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart of overhead:

- What makes a résumé powerful (questions for group discussion)
- A sample career objective

Handouts:

- Name that Drink
- Parts of a Functional Résumé
- Résumé Tip Sheet
- Résumé Evaluation

A few samples of good Functional Résumés

PURPOSE:

1. To make the link between descriptive writing and effective résumés
2. To present and highlight the Functional Résumé format and to develop résumés using this model
3. To practice giving and receiving feedback

1. **Powerful Résumé Writing: Introduction**

Note to facilitator: Ideally, this workshop should be presented in a place where participants have the opportunity to use computers to write or revise their résumés. It can be spread over several days so that participants have the chance to receive feedback from you and the group. It's important that participants bring in a hard copy and disk copy of their résumé and have had the opportunity to complete a skills inventory (either in activities in the previous workshop or other skills inventories of your choice).

Introduce the importance of effective résumé writing in today's labour market by drawing on the following text:

> It seems that the days when you could successfully find work solely by bombarding organizations with your résumé have come to an end. You've no doubt heard stories of people who have sent out literally hundreds of résumés and had no response. Today's labour market requires a more diversified active approach. Why, then, is it important to learn how to develop a powerful résumé? A résumé is still a key piece of your self-marketing plan. Along with other strategies and marketing pieces, an eye-catching, descriptive and creative résumé can help set you apart , pave the way for your follow up activities and help you find work.
>
> The work alternatives explored in the second workshop of this series illustrate how work has changed from the traditional 9 to 5 job. Because of this shift in the labour market, the way we look for work has also changed and become more competitive. This competition has meant that you need an edge and a solid marketing plan to show employers your talents. An effective résumé is one component of the plan across various work alternatives. For example, organizations who tender contacts often request the résumé of those that will be involved in the project. Small business owners use résumés to promote their abilities and qualities to potential buyers. Résumé writing remains an important skill in helping you find work opportunities.

Like catchy advertisements or good public relations campaigns, your résumé should be creative, unique and say a lot in a short space. It needs to have a balance between being descriptive and being concise. Treat it as a genuine writing project that is your own professional advertisement.

2. Descriptive Writing Activity - Name that Drink
Handout: Name that Drink

Descriptive and concise writing is essential in order to produce a powerful résumé. One way to familiarize participants with this style of writing is to have them describe something without naming it (sort of a writer's charades). Ask each participant to think of their favourite drink and write a description without naming it. Ask them to think of how they would describe it to their friends in such a way that they would be able to guess what it is – right down, if possible, to the brand name. Think of places where people drink this beverage. Describe the ideal situation to drink it. How do you drink it? When and why? Think of all the words and phrase you could use to describe it.

Invite participants take 3-5 minutes to write a description of their favourite drink. The focus of this activity is to use words sparingly, but effectively. They should use single words, point form and key descriptors. After they have finished their descriptions, they will be asked to share it with the group. Ask for volunteers to read their descriptions and see if the group can guess what it is.

You may wish to use an example of your own or the one below to give participants a model to draw upon.

Ex.: *My favourite drink is cold and best when it is served with lots of ice.*

- *It's copper-brown in colour*
- *With a slice of lemon it tastes just right.*
- *This drink can also be served hot and the British are known for having a cup of it at 3:00 p.m. People living in the Southern US find this drink more refreshing served cold and sweet.*
- *Can you guess what my favourite drink is?*

Answer: Ice Tea

Debrief

Thank participants for sharing their description with the group. Ask them to think about what words were effective in helping them guess the drink. Write examples on flip chart.

Descriptive writing helps to create a mental picture of what you are trying to convey. Using adjectives, adverbs and descriptive phrases, gives the reader a quick and easy snapshot. How is this similar to writing a résumé? A résumé is a snapshot of you and your skills, qualities and interests. It helps to tell potential employers who you are and reasons why they should be interested in you.

3. What makes a Résumé Powerful?
[Group discussion]

Write the following questions on a flip chart and have the group share their ideas in plenary.

1. What makes a résumé powerful? Answers might include:

   - effective in helping you get an interview
   - accurate, succinct information
   - it thinks for the employer - it makes their job easy
   - it stands out in the crowd

2. What is the employer looking for? (Make reference to employability/transferable skills.) Answers might include:

   - a match between your skill set and their services
   - to see what you can do for them
   - to see why they should talk to you
   - a reason to put your résumé in the interview pile as opposed to the rejected pile

3. What do you hope to achieve with your résumé? Answers might include:

   - market my abilities
   - show results
   - highlight assets
   - stand out
   - make it to the interview pile

Two key points to highlight about powerful résumé writing:

- employers spend between 10-30 seconds reading your résumé and they often receive hundreds a day;
- employers say that a résumé must be clear and tell them what you really want to do. They want you to lead them in the direction of where you want to go.

4. Functional Résumés
Handout: Parts of a Functional Résumé

They say that there are 101 different ways to put together a résumé. The shear amount of information on résumé writing can be overwhelming. This section introduces participants to changes in résumé writing. It focuses on the Functional Résumé because it is skills oriented (drawing on their skill set and strengths identified in the Recognizing Your Leading Edge Workshop). A Functional Résumé is flexible and headings in this format can be changed easily and adapted to a highlight specific areas relevant to a particular occupational field. Each section of the Functional Résumé can be used and adapted in the development of other self-marketing tools.

Note to facilitator: You will want to have a few examples for participants to reference.

Draw on the following text to introduce writing the functional résumé:

> Because your résumé is a reflection of you and your skills, you will want to bring your own unique style to it. There are, however, certain formats and headings that will help you guide the employer to your accomplishments and what you want them to know. Headings can be changed to apply to your area of interest. It is important that you research your field and use language in these headings that is appropriate. The purpose of a résumé is guide employers through your accomplishments, skills and strengths as effectively as possible.
>
> The handout contains a comprehensive list of headings for a Functional Résumé. You will not want to use them all. Choose the ones that give the best snapshot of you.

Note to facilitator: You may want to ask participants if they are familiar with this style of writing a résumé in order to gage how much time to spend walking through each section. You may want to draw on those who have used this format to explain the function of each section. Where applicable add to the discussion using the following text:

- ***Personal Information***

  The purpose of this section is very straightforward. It provides the employer with your contact information.

- ***Career Objective***

  This section tells the employer what type of work you are interested in. It shows the employer you have thought about where your skills and experiences would be best applied. It is often one of the hardest sections of your résumé to write because you want it to be as targeted as possible without narrowing work opportunities. [Later in the workshop, there will be the opportunity for participants to write and get feedback on their career objectives].

- ***Highlights of Qualifications/Key Qualities***

  The purpose of this part of your résumé is to catch the attention of the employer with your outstanding skills, qualities and abilities without them having to search for it. It goes on the first page of your résumé as a way to enticing the employer to read further. Use adjectives, noun descriptors, present tense verbs to create precise and descriptive phrases about your abilities.

- ***Skills/Experience***

  More and more employers want to know what you can do more than what degree or diploma you hold. The idea here is to display the skills that you have developed and categorize them

in such a way that is relevant to your field and to the employer whom you are sending it. For example, someone in the field of international development might have skill headings such as policy development, program management and administration.

- ***Work Experience*** *(Profession, Personal, Volunteer)*

  This is the section where you tell the employer the work you have done. If your work history is very regular, you may want to list your experiences in a chronological format. If your have never had a formal position, think of all the paid and unpaid work that you have done that would be of interest to an employer and group them according to common skills.

- ***Education and Training***

  List chronologically your diplomas, certificates, course and professional development

- ***Other Information***

  In this section you can have sub-headings such as awards, languages, community service, etc.

Note to facilitator: Emphasize with participants that these sections can be mixed and matched to suit individual values, situations, career objectives, employer preferences and industry key words. There are many ways to write a résumé, but a résumé should reflect what participants know about the field or industry in which they are conducting their work search. An effective résumé consolidates what you know about the field and what you know about yourself. Functional résumés are useful in that they use labour market information to highlight skills, strengths and attributes. However, they may not be applicable in certain situations. It's important that participants use their own judgement, knowledge and creativity when composing their personal masterpiece.

5. The Career Objective

Use the following text to introduce a method of writing a career objective:

> The career objective is one of the more difficult sections of your résumé to compose. It is a mini vision statement for your career path. (For some, who are exploring their career options, writing their career objective may seem premature. Many have difficulty setting a career goal about which they are still uncertain). A career objective is not carved in stone, however. It can be changed and rewritten as often as needed. On a résumé, the career objective tells the employer how you fit with their organization. Remember that you want to give it direction without being too narrow and thereby closing off possibilities.

You may want to provide an example of your own or the one below:

Example:

> *George is applying for the position of assistant recreation director of the Toronto YMCA. He wants to learn more about and develop his skills in creating recreational programs for children with disabilities.*
>
> *In applying for this position, George states that his career objective is:*
>
> *To obtain challenging work in the field of recreation management in a community based organization and to further enhance my skills in program development especially with people with disabilities.*

Set the context for participants to write their career objective statement. You may want to have them write what their career objective is now. Or, if they are going into a practicum, internship, work placement or co-op program, you can ask them to imagine what their career objective will be after they have finished this experience. Alternatively, you can ask them, if they are not sure

what their career objective is, to imagine one that they would like to have one day.

Provide at least 15 minutes of practice time allowing them to create one or more career objective(s). In plenary, ask for volunteers, who would like feedback from the group, to share their career objective statement. Sharing this statement in plenary allows participants to hear the diversity of styles and objectives in the group. It also provides another way to further reflection on their own statement.

Debrief

It is important to revisit this statement from time to time to see if it's congruent with where they see themselves now and in the future. It is a targeted sentence which means that it should be appropriate to the organization or occupational field to which they are applying. Encourage participants to place their objective(s) in their portfolios as a model to refer to when they revise their résumés.

6. New Technology and Résumé Writing

Before having participants practice writing or revising their résumés, you may want to reference and describe the following new electronic methods of writing and sending résumés.

New technology has changed the format of which you send your résumés to organizations in many sectors. New ways to post your résumés does not change the content, just the format in which it is presented. Take some time to explore the various ways résumés are presented via the Internet or in electronic forms such as ASCII or Scanable. If participants have used any of these formats, invite them to share their experience with the rest of the group.

Use the following text to outline these formats:

Internet

Many Internet sites that post jobs have an electronic form that you simply fill out. It lists much of the information found on your résumé. On these sites, you input information regarding your skills, training, etc. directly into their database. Employers search the sites for candidates to fill positions at their organization. These sites walk you through this posting process which, for the most part, is straightforward. Most have a glossary for entering key words or common acronyms that employers will look for and recognize.

Electronic Résumés

An electronic résumé is a résumé (chronological or functional) formatted to read well when scanned and searched by optical scanning systems. Electronic résumés include both Scanable and ASCII formats.

Scanable Résumé
[**Adapted from**: *Creating Electronic Résumés* - http://www.upenn.edu/CPPS/seas/seas_resii.html] *1997*

Many companies are scanning résumés and maintaining their own databases of applicants. A Scanable résumé is a form of your résumé which can be scanned into a computer and easily read. The information changes very little, but the format is plain by comparison so that it is highly readable.

Scanable résumés should:

- be on 8.5x11 inch paper and printed on one side only
- be printed on a high quality laser or ink-jet printer (do not submit photocopies)
- use a standard size and type of font (commonly used fonts such as Arial, Times, Courier, Helvetica in 12 point)
- have your name, address and phone numbers on separate lines
- use ALL CAPS or **bold** to highlight information (do not use graphics, italics, underlining, lines, shading or fancy lettering)
- have one inch margins (do not cram information)
- contain key words of the industry or organization to which you are applying
- NOT be stapled or folded

ASCII Format
[See "How to Build and Submit Your Résumé in ASCII Text," *Career Mosaic*, http://www.careermosaic.com/cm/rwc/rwc13.html]

ASCII (pronounced "askee") is a standard clear text format that can be understood by many different word processing programs. Because everyone does not use the same computer platform, ASCII can help you send your résumé to various computer destinations and be read with ease.

To create an ASCII résumé, simply take your existing résumé file and save it in a Rich Text Format (RTF). You will notice that ASCII will not recognize many formatting commands, therefore, avoid using special characters, tabs (use the space bar instead) alignment, bold, italics. Spell check your document before you save it as a text file because you can't spell check in RTF format.

7. Advantages and Disadvantages to Posting Your Résumé Electronically

Take a moment to brainstorm the advantages and disadvantages of posting your résumé on-line with the group.

Advantages:

- Increased employer access to your résumé and you
- Speed
- Less costly approach to searching for work globally

Disadvantages:

- no personal contact
- question of confidentiality

The jury is still out on whether posting your résumé on-line or having it scanned into an organization's data-base increases the chances of finding work. Of course, having more and more people come in contact with your résumé is beneficial. And, if you are work searching at a distance, it does have an economic advantage.

Following-up on your Internet postings with hard copies of your résumé and/or contacting the organization directly, can greatly improve the effectiveness of your electronic work search. An important point to keep in mind when posting your résumé on-line is that it is like nailing your résumé to a tree in a town square – where every employer, citizen, sales person and con artist can see it. You will want to consider and check into confidentiality issues of a particular site before you put your résumé on it.

8. Optional Activities
Handout: Résumé Tip Sheet

The following activity is a way of consolidating the advice on résumé writing with participants' own experience of writing résumés. It can be used as a basis for participants to give each other feedback on their résumés.

- Tips, Hints and Insights

  The group will have its own insights and tips about writing effective résumés because we all have had this experience. There is a tip-sheet in the participants' handouts which you may want to review and take-up in plenary. Ask participants if they have any additional advice that they would like the rest of the group to know.

- Putting on the Employer's Hat

Handouts: Résumé Evaluation

Using the tip sheet and résumé evaluation handout, have participants get into pairs and evaluate each other's résumés as if they were the employer. Feedback, in this case, should be immediate, descriptive, positive and specific. Have them use the résumé evaluation handout as a guide to examining each other's résumés. Have each dyad take 10 minutes to evaluate one partner's résumé and come up with 3 recommendations. Then have them switch roles (total 20 minutes).

Debrief this activity in plenary by asking the group if they have any questions and/or comments regarding résumé writing.

9. Summary and Closure of Powerful Résumé Writing

Draw on the following text to close the session:

> Like good novels and plays, résumés are constantly rewritten and developed. It is important to seek feedback from your friends, family and employers. A résumé describes us and our achievements; it is not simply a list of our jobs and schools attended. Jana Parker in *Damn Good Résumé Guide* says that the fastest way to improve a résumé is it to "remove everything that starts with 'responsibilities included' and replace them with on-the-job accomplishments."

Conclude by inviting each participant to state one thing that they have learned about résumé writing and offer one piece of advice on résumé writing to the group.

INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

- Meeting with someone who represents a field of interest (or a worker in an occupation/job of interest.
- Collect information that is relevant to you. You choose who and what questions.

BENEFITS OF INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

- First hand information
- Networking
- Personal perspective - path, values, style
- Observation
- Practice communication/interview skills

WORKSHOP: PRO-ACTIVE WORK SEARCH TOOLS

- Information Interviewing
- Networking
- The Employment Proposal

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Interviewing and Feedback Skills
- Employment Proposal Process
- Homework for Mock Interview (Optional)

Handouts:

- Information Interviewing
- Finding the Roots of Your Network
- Accessing Your Net
- The Employment Proposal

PURPOSE:

1. To introduce participants to pro-active work search tools
2. To develop interviewing, networking and proposal writing skills
3. To produce action plans to use pro-active tools in looking for work opportunities

1. Pro-active Work Search Tools: Introduction

Draw on the following text to introduce participants to the importance of being pro-active in searching for work opportunities:

> The growth in self employment, contract work and home-based businesses (non-standard work alternatives) and the decline of full-time, full-year employment suggests that the way we look for and obtain work has also shifted. More and more, we need to have pro-active and creative approaches in searching for work. We need to develop a self marketing plan that incorporates what we know about the current labour market and what we know about our interests, career aspirations and the skills, strengths and qualities that make us unique.
>
> This workshop focuses on three pro-active approaches in developing a self-marketing package. These tools are: the information interviewing, networking and the employment proposal.

2. The Information Interview: What is it?

Information Interviewing is a highly effective means of collecting information about a specific field of interest, occupation or job. An information interview generally consists of a meeting (preferably face to face) with someone who represents a field of interest or is actually doing a job that you want to find out more about. It is more formal than networking because you arrange a time to interview a particular individual (networking tends to be an ongoing activity).

Information Interviewing has the advantage of helping you collect information relevant to your specific interests and information needs because you choose *who* to interview and *what* questions to ask.

There are many benefits to conducting an information interview:

- It gives you first-hand information and a realistic view of the field. You can learn about factors of the work not covered in other labour market sources. If the interview is carried out at the work site (the preferred place), you can observe the work environment directly as well.

SKILLS OF INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

- Building Rapport
- Asking Open Questions
- Summarizing
- Feedback

RULES OF FEEDBACK

Immediate - here and now

Descriptive - as opposed to evaluative

Positive - constructive

Specific - as opposed to vague

"I" - (my perspective)

- It helps build contacts with people whom you may connect with in the future (ie. it builds your professional network). The person being interviewed may give you referrals to others in the field.

- It is an opportunity to practice communication and interviewing skills without the anxiety associated with a job interview.

- It is a chance to hear how others have developed their career paths. You can gain a more personal perspective, gathering not only traditional labour market information, but also learning such important, but neglected, information such as:

  1. what kind of personality or personal style is prevalent (most successful) in this type of work?;
  2. what "values" drive the work?; and
  3. what are the rewards and drawbacks?

This kind of information can then be assessed against your own self-knowledge. For example, does my personality match? Do I value the same things as my prospective co-workers? Will the benefits of the job fulfil my needs? Are the drawbacks something I could cope with?

Handout: Information Interviewing

Sample questions and forms are provided in the participants' handouts to help guide them through information interviewing. Participants may want to refer to and read their handouts.

10. Model and Practice Information Interviewing in Pairs
(70 minutes)

Note to facilitator: It is important to build gradually towards conducting information interviews. You may wish to begin by modeling an interview for the group. You might also invite a guest speaker to come in and be interviewed by the full group. Participants could practice by interviewing each other, their family and friends before scheduling interviews with a representative from a field that interests them. Encourage participants to practice the skills of effective interviewing, complete advance research and follow up appropriately.

INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

3 Things you - know well
- can speak about

Interviewer

1. Choose topic that most genuinely interest you.
2. Take time to prepare your questions (use your Portfolio)
3. Focus on practising skills
   - Building rapport
   - Open questioning
   - Summarizing

Interviewee

After the interview, take time to give the interviewer feedback re: the use of the 3 skills. What helped?

- Rules of Feedback
- Timekeeper

The purpose of practicing in pairs is to hone participants' skills and to demonstrate the power of interviewing as an information gathering tool. Before setting up the practice session, spend time walking through the following interview skills. In large group, explore the following techniques:

- Building Rapport: Ask participants for concrete examples of how they could build rapport. Responses could include:
  - arrive on time;
  - greet person by name
  - demonstrate that you're listening (ex. occasionally paraphrase)
  - maintain appropriate eye contact
  - ask questions that show you've researched the field/company/position

- Asking Open Questions: Open questions are questions that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no," but rather require some detail.

  Have participants practice brief discussions in pairs. First, have them ask about what their partner did last night using only closed questions. Then have them switch to open questions.

- Summarizing: Underscore the importance of summarizing at the end of an interview as a means of expressing appreciation, confirming accuracy of your understanding and drawing the interview to closure. To illustrate, ask a participant to summarize, using their own words, what you have been talking about for the past 5 minutes.

- Feedback: Highlight the importance of feedback as a critical employability skill. Many employers report that their new hires have considerable difficulty giving and receiving feedback. The following "Rule of Feedback" can serve as a guide.

Feedback should be:

1. Immediate - deliver feedback as close to the event as possible.

2. Descriptive - (as opposed to evaluative) describe the behaviour observed.

3. Positive - reinforce behaviours that are positive.

4. Specific - provide as much concrete detail as possible in describing the behaviour.

Elicit examples of feedback from group members to reinforce the rules. We tend to assume that giving and receiving feedback comes naturally, but it is a high order skill that will likely require practice and coaching. Effective feedback provides the receiver with a clear directive regarding what behaviours should and should not be repeated in the future.

Once you have walked through each of the four skills, set the stage for practicing information interviewing. Have each participant write down 2-3 things that they know about/ could teach someone. Their list might include a hobby, an interest, paid or volunteer work they have done. Have participants choose a partner (preferably someone they do not know well). Review the following directions and the roles of each partner:

1. Exchange lists.

2. Choose initial roles - One partner will be the interviewer; the other the interviewee.

3. The interviewer is asked to:

   - Read your partner's list and choose the topic that most genuinely interests you.

- Take time to prepare your interview questions. You may refer to the information interviewing handout for support material.

- Interview your partner for 30 minutes. In addition to eliciting relevant information, try to practice the following skills:

  a. build rapport (ex. Establish and respect the time frame, be prepared, make appropriate eye contact);

  b. ask open questions (ie. questions that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no," but rather require some detail)

  c. summarize (ie. conclude the interview with a summary statement that highlights key learnings/relevant information. For example: Thank you for your time. What I got most from this interview is..."

4. The interviewee is asked to:

   - answer the interviewers' questions as fully and honestly as possible;

   - following the interview, provide the interviewer with feedback regarding their use of the 3 skills (building rapport, open questions, and summarizing).

Provide 70 minutes for pairs to practice interviewing each other (30 minutes per interview and 5 minutes each for feedback).

Debrief

In the large group, highlight key learning points.

- What kinds of questions were most effective in eliciting information?
- What skills did you use during your interview?
- How could you follow-up on this interview?
- How will you use this tool in your own work search?

4. Networking
Handouts: Finding the Roots of Your Network
Accessing Your Net

Note that useful insights and work opportunities can be gained from networking. Most of us have a multitude of networks in our daily lives, both formal and informal.

Use the following text to present networking as a pro-active work search tool and a method of accessing labour market information.

Define Networks and Networking

Adapted from *Career World* and *Making it Work: Career Management for the New Workplace*

Networking is often a misunderstood term. It is sometimes assumed to be important only for conducting business, not developing careers. A network is a "group of interconnected people having similar goals and interests." You probably have a network of friends and acquaintances who, when asked, are likely to give you tips, information and suggestions of people to contact outside your immediate network. Networking means talking to those in your network and those who your network knows for tips and information about careers and work opportunities. Start with those close to you (your family, friends, peers, mentors and work and personal references) and then build out. Accessing your network means that you are prepared to give your contacts your résumé (they may want to pass it on to their own networks) and that you keep track of your contacts (when you follow-up with your contacts or when they call you, you can quickly retrieve information on who they are and the record of your last meeting quickly).

There are many good reasons, besides finding leads on work opportunities, to network. Those in your network can help you access career information the can help you make decisions about training programs, business management tips and ways to improve your work performance. You can access this information through four main routes:

61a

FUNCTION OF EMPLOYMENT PROPOSAL

- Get work
- Increase funding for an organization
- Improve the services in/functioning of an organization
- Identify a need and offer a solution
- Network by introducing your work to a company

TYPES OF PROPOSALS

1. Unsolicited
2. Solicited
3. Employment

- **advice** (people who are living your career goal can give you the "inside scoop" on their experience)
- **instruction** (people who you know have a particular skill may be willing, when asked, to help you develop it)
- **connections** (those you know can put you in touch with people "in the know")
- **information** (labour market information exist within your network and is there for the asking)

5. Networking in Action

Ask participants to take 10 minutes to use the handout, Finding the Roots of Your Network, to record who is at the core of their network (their family, friends, mentors, references). After they have written the names and contact information of these people, ask them to read the handout, Accessing Your Net, and take 10 minutes to write down one thing they would like to know from each of the four routes. Have them select one person from their network for each category that could be approached for this information.

Depending on time limits and group process, participants can work in pairs or individually to develop an action plan for contacting the people that they have identified from their lists. In pairs, participants may want to practice networking situations and scenarios after generating their action plans.

Debrief

Debrief this activity in plenary by asking if they are satisfied with their plan of action. Are their any issues that they could not resolve for contacting their networks? Are there any roadblocks that would prevent them from acting on their plans?

EMPLOYMENT PROPOSAL PROCESS

1. Determine your leading edge
2. Develop a prospect list
3. Reality check
4. Decide on project or service
5. Write it

6. The Employment Proposal

Adapted from the Career Management Series, Connecting Through Writing

Introduce the functions and styles of proposal writing using the following text:

An Employment Proposal is a pro-active tool for seeking and obtaining work opportunities in which you identify a need and describe a concrete solution based on research and information gathering.

The function of an employment proposal is to:

- get work
- increase funding for an organization
- improve the services in/functioning of an organization
- identify a need and offer a solution
- network by introducing your work to a company

There are three type of proposals (unsolicited, solicited and the employment proposal).

1. **Unsolicited** proposals are the least likely to be accepted because a company has not asked for it and has not allocated funds for this work to be done. They are often written when an organization/worker is new to an industry and requires business quickly. An unsolicited proposal is sometimes sent after a potential client has indicated a casual interest.

2. **Solicited** proposals are written when there has been a call to tender proposals for a specific project. An organization seeks the services of an outside company/person to do work on a particular project that can not be done in-house.

3. **Employment** proposals are leading edge pro-active work search tools. They are usually 1-3 pages in length (in a letter format) and have very specific objectives. The main purpose is to introduce the work-seeker as a solution to a difficult business challenge faced by an organization/ employer. It is a new pro-active cover letter to your résumé.

It requires extensive research and draws on other pro-active work search tools such as networking and information interviewing for its content.

7. The Employment Proposal Process (95 minutes)

Crafting an employment proposal requires investigative research. Draw on the text below to walk participants through a process for developing this kind of proposal. Emphasize that you are briefly walking them through a process that take days, weeks or even months to research, write and submit. The steps of this process may be revisited again before they submit a proposal.

Note to facilitator: This activity can be delivered several ways and may be spread over several weeks. It can be set up as a practice and/or coincide with the actual process of submitting an employment proposal. The process outlined here is to introduce participants to writing an employment proposal, but it can be developed to support their labour market research and self-marketing plans.

1. **Determine your leading edge**: Throughout this program you have begun to identity your interests, skills and work preferences. Take ten minutes and think about your most valuable and unique skills/expertise which you could offer an employer (ie. your leading edge). Characterize your expertise in a short paragraph.

Note to facilitator: This activity depends on the context of how you have implemented the workshop series. If participants have not attended all of the workshops to this point, you may want to draw on some of the activities in the Recognize Your Leading Edge workshop to set the stage for this part of the process.

2. **Develop a prospect list**: Take ten minutes and create a list of firms, organizations and potential employers which might need someone with your unique skills and abilities. Consult your network for any possible leads on this list. If it is too soon to create a list, consider the sources of labour market information (LMI) that you would need to consult in order to identify these organizations. Write down all the sources of LMI that you need to research.

64a

THE EMPLOYMENT PROPOSAL

- Background
- Challenge
- Proposal
- Method
- Conclusion

3. The next stage of this process is a **Reality Check**. This is the time for face to face research. You may want to set up several information interviews with prospective employers and ask them about the opportunities and challenges faced in their organizations.

   Take 10 minutes and if possible, list 3 organizations, with contact names, that you would like to target in the near future as part of your reality check. Draft a list of questions to pose. Consider what you need to ask and know before drafting an employment proposal.

4. **Decide on a project or service**: Because this is a walk through of the process, it may be difficult to decide on a project or service at this point. Take 10 minutes to think about and/or imagine a project which makes use of your skills and expertise. Think about something that could directly benefit an employer and address their needs. When you decide on an project or service, take a moment to define it and consider if it is achievable? If not, what do you need to do in order to achieve it?

   Begin with a small project (even a small project can have big learning curves). It is extremely important that you feel comfortable managing what you intend to propose.

   Examples:

   - Word Processing skills and a home computer = providing word processing from home
   - "Jack/Jill of all trades" = ongoing contract at a senior's apartment complex
   - Writing skills = editor of a monthly newsletter for a company

5. **Write the Proposal**: There are several resources on proposal writing (direct participants to the bibliography in their handouts), but few on employment proposal writing directly. An employment proposal is shorter than formal proposals and written in letter format (to which you can append your résumé). The categories for content, however, are the same in both forms.

   - **Background:** Address the person by name (Dear Sir/Madam letters tend to end up in File 13 -- ie. go unnoticed)

     – Thank this person for meeting with you on (date) and talking with you about their organization
     – 1 or 2 sentences in length

     Example
     I appreciated the time you took to meet with me on June 19. I enjoyed meeting with you and learning about the challenges that your organization is facing.

   - **The Challenge:** state it simply (what and why it is a problem)

     Example
     From our discussion, I understand that you are about to recruit 30 volunteers to staff the operations of your festival and, for safety reasons you need to ensure ,that they are trained in first aid and crowd control.

   - **The Proposal:** the solution, stated clearly, with a simple description of the action you will take to resolve the problem

     Example
     As a security officer, I have trained many people in first aid as well as all aspects of security operations. I am proposing to offer a two-day course for your volunteers.

- **The Method**: how you will do it, work schedule, time lines and budget

  Example
  I will offer two courses lasting two days (one on first aid, the other on security operations) as part of the orientation session for your volunteers. My per diem for course development and delivery is $450. I estimate that the development of these course will take approximately two days and the delivery will take two days.

- **Conclusion:** Summarize briefly your proposal and state date for follow-up

  Example
  I know that you would like to have the orientation session organized as soon as possible. I can start work on development of the courses within a week's notice and can deliver five days later.

  I look forward to speaking with you soon to discuss this proposal. I will call the week of July 1 if I haven't heard from you before that date.

Have participants take 30 minutes and write a proposal that incorporates their leading edge to a real or fictional organization.

Debrief

In triads, ask participants to take 15 minutes to read each other their proposal and to discuss what they would need to know if they were to develop an employment proposal. In large group, ask each of the triads to share the insights that came from this discussion.

In conclusion, remind them that in proposals must:

- explicitly answer "What's in it for me or my company?"
- demonstrate a clear understanding of the employer's situation and needs
- be clear, purposeful and committed (ie. they must do sufficient research to be sure and confident about their proposal).

8. Summary and Closure of Pro-active Work Search Tools

Review the action plans that they developed throughout the workshop (information interviewing, networking and employment proposal writing). Ask them to think about how they will undertake these next steps and consider how they will manage their plans. Before closing, ask the group whether they have any questions or concerns about using any of these tools.

Note to facilitator: You will want to prepare in advance for the next session. Participants' homework for the next workshop is to choose from a list of job ads that you have created to match, as closely as possible, their career objectives. You will have some indication of what these occupations may be, but it is important to have participants give you a list of their preferences. After they have selected a job ad, they are to tailor their résumé to it in preparation for the mock interview. Before they leave, make certain that they indicate to you which job ad they will be applying for. You will want to have identified guest interviewers and inform them of the participants' selection as soon as possible so that they have time to prepare. Participants should also be prepared to bring in selections of their portfolio and to think of at least 3 creative strategies for introducing it in the interview. Although this is a mock interview, they should consider it an actual interview and dress and act accordingly.

To be clear about participants' preparation for the upcoming workshop, write their homework on flip chart or overhead.

WORKSHOP: YOUR LEADING EDGE IN ACTION

- Mock Interviews
- Self-Assessment and Feedback
- Cover and Follow-up Letters

YOU WILL NEED:

To invite 1-2 experienced interviewers to perform mock interviews

On flip chart or overhead:

1. Schedule and Agenda for Interviews
2. Tips for Cover Letter Writing
3. Tips for Follow-up Letter Writing

Examples of Cover Letters

Handouts:

- Possible Interview Questions
- Post-Interview Checklist

PURPOSE:

1. To practice and develop presentation and interview skills in a mock interview situation
2. To self assess and practice receiving feedback on interview performance
3. To identify strengths and target areas that need to be developed in interview situations

1. **Your Leading Edge in Action:** Introduction

   Handouts: Possible Interview Questions

This workshop brings work search tools like résumés, covering letters and employment portfolios to life in a mock interview. The focus of this session is on developing communication skills, non-verbal behaviour, interactive use of work search tools and the ability to sell strengths to potential employers. It takes practice to develop presentation skills and yet getting interviews in today's world of work seems more and more difficult. The labour market is too competitive to be practicing interview skills at job interviews. This workshop provides participants with the opportunity to practice their skills in a realistic, but relatively non-threatening setting.

Note to facilitator: This workshop requires a lot of planning on the part of the facilitator. Before the workshop takes place, you will need to obtain background information on the participants as to their occupational preferences or field of study and to arrange for volunteer interviewers to conduct the mock interviews. Based on participants' preferences, you will write a number of job ads from which participants will choose to be interviewed. They need to inform you of their selections so that you can help your guest interviewers prepare for the workshop. Depending on the size of the group, you will need to invite 1-2 experienced interviewers to interview participants around the job ads. Before the guest interviewers arrive, they should be provided with a list of the job ads as well as a list of the participants' selections.

Depending on how you structure the workshops of the **Leading Edge**, you will need to take some time in the preceding workshop or to arrange a time before the interviews to meet with the participants. At this meeting, you will ask them to tailor their résumé to their selected job ad. They should treat the mock interview as an actual interview and prepare, act and dress accordingly. Encourage them to bring in their portfolio or evidence of their skills and their references. Distribute the possible interview questions handout as a way to guide their preparation for the interview. The interviewers will be given the same list from which to draw upon for composing their questions. The focus of this interview is not so much on content but on the participants' performance in the interview. It is important that you emphasize this in your directives to both participants and interviewers.

An integral part of this session is having participants assess their performance in the interview and then sharing this assessment with the interviewer in a one on one feedback session. The role of self-assessment and feedback is an important part of this exercise which can be extended beyond this activity to other areas of career development. By combining the self-assessment and feedback process together in this activity, participants have the opportunity to match their own beliefs about their skill level with the observations of experts. For many of us, it is far more difficult to state what we do well than what we need to improve. Young people are often far more critical of their performance than the interviewer. The feedback session provides a chance for participants to learn what they do well and, through a constructive approach, learn what to improve upon. In the preceding workshop (Pro-active Work Search Tools), participants had the opportunity in the information interview activity to give their peers feedback on their interview skills. This will be an opportunity to practice receiving feedback on their interview presentation skills. You may want to remind participants that giving and receiving feedback is a critical employability skill which needs to be practiced.

As the facilitator, you will have many roles. You are the time-keeper (to ensure that the workshop moves according to the schedule). In order to convey the sense of an actual interview, you will play the role of an administrative assistant who introduces the participants individually to their interviewer. The realism of the activity is key, but you also want to make sure that the workshop is a productive experience. The seriousness of the activity will be brought out through your modeling of these roles. It is also important the your guest interviewers understand the nature of this exercise and are skilled at giving feedback. This will ensure that the activity is a positive and constructive experience for the participants.

2. Agenda for Mock Interviews
(4 Hours)

Handouts: Post-interview Checklist

Before this session, you will want to distribute to both the participants and the guest interviewers a list of possible interview questions and post-interview checklist handouts.

To review, there are two main goals/ outcomes of this session:

1. To practice being interviewed by employers or professionals in the human resource management field.

2. To practice self-assessing and receiving feedback

Depending on the context, number of participants and your time limits, you will want to schedule the mock interview and feedback session accordingly. You will want to post the schedule for the interviews on flip chart for participants to reference. The interviewers should be provided with this schedule before the workshop takes place. Below is an example of an agenda that could be used for 12 participants divided into two groups.

1. Introduction of session and guests (15 minutes)

2. Interviews (2 hours)

   Two groups of 6. Interviews are scheduled at every 20 minutes. Participants are interviewed for 15 minutes leaving 5 minutes for turnaround and for the interviewers to assess the interviewee. After each interview, participants will take time using the post-interview checklist to analyze their performance.

3. Feedback (1 ½ hours)

   Participants meet with their interviewers for 15 minutes feedback sessions. Participants begin this session by walking through their self-assessment and overall impression with the interviewer. Then the interviewer runs through their assessment of the interview and impression of the participant's performance.

4. Wrap-up

You may want to ask participants for their reactions to the feedback session. Have the interviewers summarize the reactions to the interviews as a whole. Encourage participants to make copies of the checklist to help them chart their improvements. These checklists can serve as a record of their skill development which they can include in their portfolio as preparation for their next interview.

Highlight the importance of preparation in the interview process as well as the significance of self-assessment and feedback in the development of their presentation skills.

3. Additional Activities for the Group during Interviews

While the interviews are taking place, participants will be preparing and self-assessing. During the feedback portion of this workshop, participants can, if time allows, compose a follow-up letter to the interview or practice writing cover letters as models to include in their portfolio.

Cover Letters

Most résumé writing guides include sections on writing cover letters. You may want to a list of resources for participants to use a reference material. There are a few resources listed in the appendix of their handouts. Many participants will likely already be familiar with the format. Have a few examples on hand for participants to reference, model and adapt to their own style.

Cover Letters have two purposes:

- Present individual qualifications related to the specific job requirements and employer expectations
- Elicit further consideration by the employer.

Present and write on flip chart the following key points about cover letter writing:

- must always accompany résumés/applications
- must always include the name, title and address of the individual to whom you are sending your résumé
- must always address the person by name (call company to ensure the correct spelling)
- must be targeted -referencing specific skills and abilities relevant to the employer
- state in the first paragraph why you are sending résumé
- repeat or highlight part of your résumé
- invite action or point to follow-up in closing paragraph

Follow-up Letter

Adapted from *:High Impact Interview by Jeff Staller (Kitchener, Ontario: Résumés First Publishing, 1992) and Job Web Australia http://www.jobweb.com.au/follett.htm*

Follow-up letters are replacing the traditional thank you letter. Many résumé writing manuals argue that thanking an interviewer for an interview serves only to lower your status in the employer's eyes. In a follow-up letter, you present yourself as an equal while still voicing your appreciation of having had an interview.

A follow-up letter has several uses:

- method for continued dialogue between the candidate and the recruiter
- opportunity to state skills and experience for the position
- evidence that the candidate is taking the position seriously and reaffirming interest
- pro-active opportunity to market yourself
- references your ability to offer solutions to key issues and objectives discussed during the interview (*From Job Web Australia*)

The format for this letter is the same as a cover letter (ie. interviewer's name, title and company address on left hand side, date and interviewer's last name after the salutation). The first line reminds the interviewer of the date of interview and position applied for. If appropriate, identify a strength the interviewer demonstrated during the interview and indicate what the interviewer did to show

that strength (ie. I was particularly impressed by your commitment to quality and your team approach to problem-solving that you described). Reiterate the skills and attitudes needed of a successful candidate and how you have demonstrate these same skills. You may want to include an additional copy of your résumé with these skills highlighted. Sign off by stating that you look forward to hearing from the interviewer. Don't forget to sign the letter.

Follow-up Letter Tips:

- Write your letter immediately following your interview and send it that same day. It's important that the letter be received by the recruiter as quickly as possible (fax, express post or drop off are ideal).

- Write a follow-up letter after each interview for this position and not just after the first.

Invite participants to write both a cover letter and a follow-up letter for the job that they are applying for in the mock interview (or for their dream job). They may not have enough time during the feedback portion of the workshop to complete their letters. Encourage them to complete them as models and put them in their portfolios as a reference. Have them pair up and comment each others letters, using the tips and outlines as a guide. Encourage participants to have someone always proof read their letters before sending them to employers.

WORKSHOP: CONSOLIDATION: PLANNING THE NEXT STEPS OF THE JOURNEY

- Leading Edge Wheel
- Vision/Mission Statement
- Career-Life Project
- Goal Setting
- "Whole Brained" Approach to Goal Setting
- Goal Test
- Action Planning
- Contingency Planning

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- objectives/ MEGA objective
- Leading Edge Wheel
- Structure of the Wheel
- Vision Graphic
- Traditional Decision-Making Model
- Gelatt's Four Paradoxical Principles
- The Goal Test
- Action Planning Questions

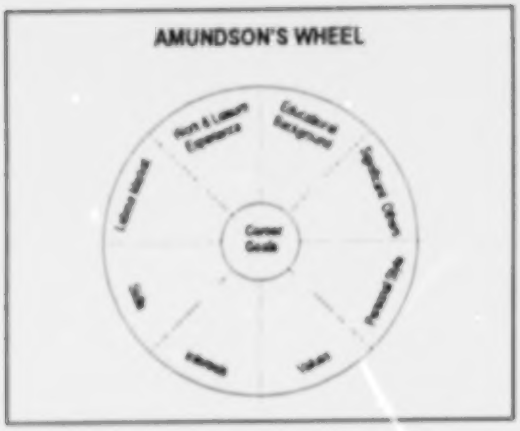
Handouts:

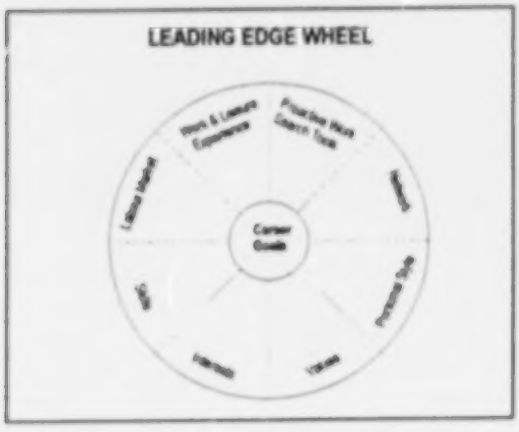
- Career-Life Project
- "Are You Ready for the Paradoxical Principles?" Questionnaire
- Action Planning Questions

PURPOSE:

- To consolidate learning as a foundation for goal setting and action planning
- To introduce the concept of positive uncertainty and whole brained approach to goal setting
- To introduce goal testing as a process for participants to use in articulating their goals
- To work with an approach to identify barriers to action and to develop pathways to circumvent barriers
- To emphasize the importance of building in supports for success

76a





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1. Consolidation

Note to facilitator: This workshop is meant to conclude and consolidate the workshops in the *Leading Edge*. It is meant to be the final workshop of the series. The main objective of this workshop is to help participants consolidate the learning about the labour market and themselves that they have discovered over the course of the previous workshops.

The objectives for the Consolidation Workshop are to:

- integrate and reflect on the learning from having explored outward and inward through the *Leading Edge;*
- identify smart career goals for the future; and
- use a holistic approach to goal setting in order to action plan for the next steps of their career journey.

The Consolidation Workshop is structured to be delivered as a full-day session. The agenda for the workshop begins with consolidation and then moves to decision-making, goal-setting and action planning. At this point of the program, it is a good idea to revisit the Mega-Objective as a way of reconnecting participants with the "big picture" of the *Leading Edge*.

MEGA OBJECTIVE

- To provide participants with specific knowledge, pro-active attitudes, tangible tools and skills to support their transition into the workplace.
- To enable participants to reflect on, personalize and integrate their career experiences.
- To initiate a conscious journey which will result in a greater sense of purpose, personal career direction and support for success.

2. The Leading Edge Wheel: Where are you now?

Adapted from: *Career Pathways, "The Wheel," by Norman Admundson (Richmond, BC: Ergon Communication, 1995)*

(60 minutes)

Admundson's Wheel

It is often helpful to have a way of visualizing the components influencing our career development. Norman Admundson devised a career/life planning organizer based on his *Centric Model of Career Choice* where an individual's career goals are examined according to eight factors essential to career planning. The model is divided into internal factors (skills, interest, values and personal style) and external factors (labour market, work and leisure experience, educational background and significant others) that influence career choice.

The circle is divided into eight wedges which represent an influence factor. The size of the wedge may change depending on how influential that factor is in the person's career goal. The external/internal split is also flexible depending on the importance of these factors in one's life.

Background

In the *Leading Edge*, Amundson's Wheel has been adapted to become both a tool to provide a mental framework for understanding one's marketable assets and a way to consolidate learning in a career planning process. Following the components of the *Leading Edge* program, the tailored LE Wheel is comprised of external factors covered in the workshop series such as the labour market, work and leisure experience, pro-active work search tools, our network. Likewise, internal factors of the LE Wheel include skills, interests, values and personal style.

Present the *Leading Edge Wheel* using the following text:

> The *Leading Edge Wheel* is a "tool to provide a mental framework for understanding your marketable assets. It can be used throughout the career planning process to generate career options and to organize information.... It is divided into eight essential career planning factors" (Amundson, 1995, 14).

Use a flip chart or overhead to draw the model of the wheel.

Have participants think back to the workshops in the *Leading Edge*.

The first step in this session is to consolidate the modules and then move to personal consolidation.

Begin by having participants brainstorm all of the activities that involved exploring inward:

Response may included:

- Dependable Strengths
- personal logos
- information interviewing
- High Five Messages

Have them consider the internal factors listed on the wheel. Briefly walk through each section and write on the flip chart where the activities fit with the model:

- skills
- personal style (how you go about doing things, preferences)
- interests (both work and non-work)
- values (ie. work [variety, travel advancement, money] and personal [honesty, risk, integrity, friendship])

Then have the participants brainstorm all the activities which involved exploring outward. These include:

- Understanding the Labour Market (Structure of the Labour Market, the Changing Workplace, New Economy "drivers")
- Gathering and organizing information on your work and leisure experiences (Dependable Strengths, Charland's Work Analysis, Link to Self-Marketing)
- Pro-active work search tools (Portfolio Building, Employment proposal writing, Powerful Résumé Writing, Networking)
- Your Leading Edge in Action (Mock Interview)

Write each activity in the appropriate exploring outward section of the model (labour market information, work and leisure experiences,

79a

pro-active tools, network)

In the centre of the LE Wheel, there is a place to write an emerging career goal. The centre should be referenced in your description of the wheel, but participants should not fill in this portion until they have completed their own personal wheel and have had the opportunity to reflect on it.

With the wheel complete, ask participants to use the information recorded on the flip chart (not new information) and create their own wheel using flip chart paper, construction paper, coloured markers, magazine clippings, etc.

Provide participants with a loose structure to assist them in mapping their Wheels. Encourage participants to map their wheel in any way which is personally meaningful to them.

Write the following optional structure on flip chart or overhead and walk the participants through what each section might include before they create their wheels:

- skills : "top" 5 best skills
- personal style: 5 personal characteristics
- interests: 3 of the past and 3 for the future (work and/or non-work)
- values: 3 work values and 3 personal values
- labour market: identify key labour market trends affecting you and the 3 best labour market opportunities for you.
- work and leisure experiences: list 2 of your most successful leisure and work experiences
- pro-active tools: identify the tools that you will use in your work search
- network: identify 5 people in your network that you could contact regarding your career interests or possible work opportunities

Allow participants at least 30 minutes to complete their own wheels.

80a

MY CAREER LIFE PROJECT
LIST OF OCCUPATIONS

[illegible]

[illegible]

GROUPING OF OCCUPATIONS	
Group	Reasons

MY CAREER LIFE PROJECT

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Debrief

Invite participants to take 5 minutes to reflect on their wheels. In their consideration, ask them to think about anything that stands out for them. Are their any career goals (in the broadest sense) that they see emerging? Is their a possible career goal starting to take shape? Ask them to write this goal in the centre circle of the wheel (the glimmer in the eye of the goal setter). Reinforce that they are not making any formal commitment to this goal!

Encourage participants to place their wheels in their portfolios and refer to their wheel as a way to monitor their career building growth. It is important to acknowledge that their wheels are a work in progress and can be changed as they develop their careers.

3. Vision/Mission Statement

Adapted from *: Engage at Work, Coordinator's Guide* by Dave E. Redekopp and Barrie Day (Edmonton: Life-Role Development Group Ltd., 1994)

The previous activity uses a centric model to consolidate, in a personally meaningful way, participant's learning in the course. It helps participants' state where they are now and begin to articulate, broadly, a goal for the future. This section focuses in more specifically on where participants see themselves headed in the future.

The capacity to vision yourself in the future in a positive way is a key outcome of the career development process. If you can not imagine a positive future for yourself, you will not invest energy into developing your career. This session helps participants write a statement for the future - a guiding light for the life/work journey.

Begin by asking participants to list the characteristics of a vision statement (as in personal vision and corporate mission statement). Ask them to define what the term vision means. Record their answer on flip chart. Their answer might include:

- future achievement
- something to obtain (material or spiritual)
- a dream

Supplement their answers by presenting the vision graphic on flip chart or overhead. A vision is something that is:

- vague, open, flexible view of the future and like a dream;
- the north star/guiding light which can guide our movement
- a sense of purpose and direction
- not a goal

The graphic represents a vision as fluid -- not as a specific point (like a goal which tends to be more short-term and singular vision). A vision contains values, beliefs and interests that are not necessarily work-related. The graphic emphasizes moving towards our vision or dream in a non-linear path. It emphasizes that we sometimes take multiple routes towards our destination. The vision is a guide to our futures.

Ask participants if this is how the see a vision statement. Is there anything that they would add to the graphic? As participants take part in the activities of this workshop, it is important that they keep this graphic in mind. Post the graphic in a visible location so that participants can refer to it as they work towards crafting their vision/mission statements.

4. Career-Life Project: Activity
(60 Minutes)

Adapted from: *Career Transitions: Choices and Strategies* by Danielle Riverin-Simard (Ottawa: Canadian Career Development Foundation, 1995)

Handout: Career/Life Project

One way to begin to get a sense of our purpose and direction is to develop a "mission statement." It is a way of representing what is important to us and our many dimensions. This workshop began by consolidating and personalizing the activities in the *Leading Edge*. The Career-Life Project builds on this process by helping participants develop their own mission/vision statement.

Distribute the Career-Life Project handout to participants. Emphasize that this activity asks participants to respond spontaneously, following their heart and trusting the process. Tell participants that you will be guiding them through the various steps involved in this activity. Participants will be asked to follow your instructions, working individually through the process. Note that different people require different amounts of time to complete the

steps of the activity. Ask that participants be patient and respect each others' need for time while moving together through the steps. As you provide instructions, you'll want to observe the pace of the group. Likely, some will complete steps much more quickly than others. Be sure that everyone is ready to move on before you proceed with directions to the next steps.

Provide the following instructions to participants:

1. Place a check mark beside any occupation which attracts you. Respond spontaneously. Don't worry about whether you have the training or the skills to do the occupation. Simply go by what attracts you. You can check as many as you wish.

2. In the left column of the table, group the occupations that attract you in any way that makes sense to you. Which ones seem to naturally go together from your perspective? Which ones would you like to go together?

3. Once grouped, write down in the next column your reasons for each grouping of occupations. What does the group represent to you? What theme connects the occupations in this group? There is no right or wrong answer. Each of you will have your own unique reasons for combinations.

Note to facilitator: Provide sufficient time for participants to reflect on their groupings. This is extremely important as they are giving their own meaning to the task and articulating their personal sense of direction.

4. Prioritize your reasons, ordering them according to the importance of the reason to you and to your career development. This can be challenging, but try to get a sense of the relative importance of each reason.

5. Try to capture in one or two sentences - one short paragraph maximum - the essence of what your reasons, when put together, express about your purpose with respect to your life/work. Organizations often have mission statements that tell people the purpose or mandate of the organization. How would you put all your reasons together into a personal mission statement?

Note to facilitator: You will likely want to provide a sample for participants to reference. While emphasizing that there is no one correct format, participants of need some guidance to get started. You may use your own statement or draw from the following example:

Group	Reason	Rating
Doctor, Phys. Ed. Teacher, Psychologist, Masseur, Coach, Missionary, Retirement Counsellor, Nurse, Surgeon, Chaplain, Speech Therapist	Health and Healing	1
Interpreter, Social Worker, Group Leader Teacher, Counsellor, Councillor	Relationships, People	2-3
Artist, Painter, Sculptor, Decorator, Poet, Writer, Designer, Singer, Colour Counsellor, Photographer	Art, creative expression	2-3
Writer, Waiter, Teacher, Coach, Counsellor, Masseur, Interpreter	Fun, humour	4
Researcher, Magician, Travel Agent, Writer, Tutor, Teacher, Sailor, Planner, Public Relations, Inventor	Learning, curiosity	5

Statement: My purpose is to help people achieve and maintain health through caring relationships, creative expression, laughter and learning.

Large Group Sharing

In large group, invite participants to share their Career-Life project statement. Emphasize that sharing is not a requirement, but encourage any participants who are willing. It is usually a rich experience to hear the diversity and conviction in the statements. The statements are intended to highlight what is most important, at least for now. While everyone started with the same information and were given the same instructions, what emerges will likely be very unique statements of personal purpose.

Emphasize in the Career-Life projects:

- the range of talent and ways individuals work with the same information;
- the potential for paid and unpaid work as vehicles for achieving one or more parts of a mission statement;
- the multiple options which exist to express this career-life project;
- the usefulness of repeating this exercise at intervals, always looking to the reasons for groupings and considering how work options "fit" with the mission statement. While we receive our satisfaction from many sources, work-life satisfaction will be influenced by the extent to which our paid work is in any way connected to our sense of purpose.

Note to facilitator: This activity can be spread over several workshops and sessions of the *Leading Edge*, allowing time for personal reflection and integration. Encourage participants to put the Career-Life Project handout in their portfolio and to reflect on it as they move into goal setting.

Two Optional Extensions:

I *Career-Life Mission Statement to Career Objective*

Invite participants to think of how they would re-write their mission statement as a career objective to put on their résumé (refer participants to the back to the Career Objective exercise in the Powerful Résumé Writing workshop) Normally, a career objective is a targeted sentence that is written when applying a specific job. Ask participants to think of their dream job or possible work opportunity and write a career objective, using both their career-life mission statement and the broad career goal that they wrote in the middle of their wheel. Note that a career objective may or may not capture their entire career-life mission statement or goal.

The purpose of this exercise is to give participants a chance to bring their visions from the career-life project and the wheel to a more pragmatic context of a career objective. The next stage of the Consolidation workshop will be to help participants define and set specific goals their future career journey. This activity is one way to begin thinking more precisely about career goals while maintaining a more broad conceptualization of their career future.

II *Guided Fantasy*

Introduction

Invite participants on a "guided fantasy" as a way of imagining their mission statements coming to fruition. H.B. Gelatt argues that our mind doesn't know the difference between something that rea1y happens and something that is vividly imagined. A safe way to check out our vision of the future or career options is to imagine them.

The following "guided fantasy" script provides a sample which you may want to draw from. Be sure to move through the guided fantasy slow enough in order that participants have the time to reflect and thoroughly experience the visioning.

Guided Fantasy Script

Get comfortable and try to clear your mind of any concerns or worries. Close your eyes, if you're comfortable doing so. Take a deep breath and relax. Think about a scenario in which you are living your mission statement (where your sense of purpose and direction is being fulfilled through what you're doing). Try to see it as vividly and concretely as you can.

Imagine yourself in the future. You have made your mission statement a reality. You are there. You are there living your dream. Take yourself forward to this time. Imagine yourself there.

You may look a little different now. Look around you.

- What do you see?
- What are your surroundings like? - do you like them
- What are you doing?
- Who is with your?
- How do you feel?
- Are there any surprises? Is this what you expected?
- Are you pleased? Do you feel satisfied?

Note to facilitator: A mission statement tends to be a broad vision of the future. With questions, you may need to keep targeting in on a specific scenario where the mission is fulfilled.

Take a good look around - soak it in. Now, gradually move away. Move back in time, back to today, back to yourself and open your eye when you're ready

Debrief

Take a few minutes to process this with the participants. Ask them how it felt. Were there any surprises? Allow time for participants to discuss and/or quietly reflect on the experience. Encourage them to record their reactions and any learnings in their portfolios.

Reinforce that imaging the future provides a safe and powerful way to check out possibilities. Also note that this technique can be used to motivate action (as with professional athletes that imagine themselves winning as part of their preparation before competition). Encourage participants to check out their possibilities by doing this for any future scenarios, decisions or options they are considering.

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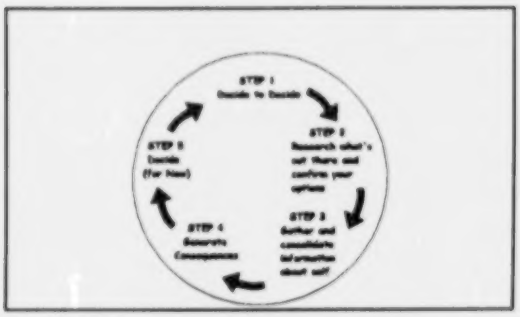

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5. **Goal Setting**: How will "I" get there?

Introduce goal setting by drawing from the following text:

The workshops in the *Leading Edge* have been working developmentally through a career-building process. They form the building blocks for being prepared to move towards decision-making, goal setting and creating plans for action. Many of us believe that:

- we can have one and only one goal;
- we must know exactly what we want and it must meets all of our needs;
- this is it! - the decision made now is the one I make for life and it's irreversible.

If we carry these messages around with us, it is hard to move forward to deciding and planning for the next steps of the journey. Goal setting can feel like it reinforces these messages because, by nature, it is a process of focussing and narrowing. Yet, decision-making and action planning are part of developmental process. A career plan should integrate critical learning about the labour market and about self (themes focused on in the workshops). A career plan is an integral part of the journey, flowing naturally from the work done so far in the program. While the program reinforces the idea that career plans need to be as specific and goal-oriented as possible, it also embraces the importance of flexibility and adaptability. A goal is for now, not necessarily forever.

To market our leading edge, we must be prepared to move forward with direction and a sense of purpose. The remainder of this workshop will you develop a written plan through a step-by-step process.

POSITIVE UNCERTAINTY

Feeling uncertain about the future
and
Feeling positive about the uncertainty

- Be focused and flexible about what you want;
- Be aware and wary about what you know;
- Be objective and optimistic about what you believe;
- Be practical and magical about what you do.

QUESTIONNAIRE: ARE YOU READY FOR THE PARADOXICAL PRINCIPLES?

Answer yes or no to the following questions

____ 1. Have you ever wanted something, gotten it, and found out you wanted something else?

____ 2. Have you ever set a clear goal or a process objective and discovered a better one along the way?

____ 3. Have you ever experienced serendipity?

____ 4. Do you sometimes engage in fuzzy thinking?

____ 5. Have you ever found it an advantage not to know something?

____ 6. Are you sometimes afraid to get a second opinion?

____ 7. Are you more familiar with the past than the future?

____ 8. Have you ever experienced misinformation?

____ 9. Have you ever distorted the truth?

____ 10. Do you sometimes feel unacquainted with reality?

____ 11. Have you ever found wishful thinking to be an advantage?

____ 12. Have you ever experienced a "self-fulfilling prophecy"?

____ 13. Have you ever made an important decision in a way that wasn't totally rational?

____ 14. Have you ever decided not to decide?

____ 15. Do you find it easier to be the result of the past than the cause of the future?

____ 16. Have you ever experienced clairvoyance?

From: Creative Decision Making by H.B. Gelatt

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6. "Whole Brained" Approach to Goal Setting

Adapted from: *Creative Decision-Making* by H.B. Gelatt (Oakville: Reid Publishing Ltd., 1991)

Draw from the following text to set the context for goal setting:

> Traditionally, approaches to decision-making or goal setting have been cognitive, linear and logical (ie. functions generally associated with the left brain) following structured steps in order to formulate sound decisions. Intuitive and creative processes have rarely been given credit. Yet, most of us have made decisions based on gut reactions. Usually, we pay a steep price for ignoring these signals. H.B. Gelatt believes that creativity and intuition can support logical and linear methods of decision making. A marriage of both approaches (bringing together our left and right brains) offers a more holistic approach to the decision-making and goal setting process.

Traditional Decision-Making Model

Present the "traditional" decision-making model. Note that, while there are variations, most include the following components:

1. Decide to decide;
2. Research what's out there and confirm you options;
3. Gather and consolidate information about self;
4. Generate consequences;
5. Decide

This is the basic traditional process which is probably familiar to most. To it, a more creative, "right-brained" spirit and strategies are added.

Positive Uncertainty

Adapted from: *Creative Decision-Making*

Gelatt coined the paradoxical term, *positive uncertainty* - feeling uncertain about the future and feeling positive about the uncertainty. He sees positive uncertainty as a "flexible, ambidextrous approach to managing change using both your rational and intuitive mind (whole brained)"

GOAL TEST

Is your goal:

- *Conceivable?* — Can it be put into words that are understandable to others?
- *Believable?* — Does the goal-setter believe in the goal?
- *Achievable?* — Can it be accomplished?
- *Desirable?* — Does the goal-setter want and value the goal?
- *Measurable?* — Is it time bound with clear outcomes and dates for achievements?

Four paradoxical principles

Gelatt's work is based on the following principles:

- be focused and flexible about what you want (know what you want, but don't be too sure);
- be aware and wary about what you know (treat your facts with imagination, but don't imagine your facts);
- be objective and optimistic about what you believe (what you believe your future to be, partly determines what it will be);
- be practical and magical about what you do (take an occasional wild goose chase because that's what wild geese are for!).

Large Group Discussion

Facilitate a large group discussion, encouraging participants to compare their reactions to Positive Uncertainty and the four paradoxical principles.

Discuss these in the context of today's labour market. How are the principles useful in today's labour market? How could you bring "positive uncertainty" to goal setting?

Questionnaire

Have participants complete the questionnaire: *"Are You Ready for the Paradoxical Principles?"* Discuss their answers and reactions. Reinforce that this is the spirit of whole brained decision-making that will be brought to goal setting.

7. Goal Setting Activity
Introduction

All career action plans start with a goal. Goals vary in scope depending upon where one is in the career development process. Examples of goals could be to:

- enter school or a training program;
- look into a program for training or further education;
- check job opportunities in a particular field by talking with someone in the industry;
- secure x position in y company by a particular date

Regardless of the goal, building strong supports and structures for action will often make the difference between forward momentum and inactivity. Clearly articulating the goal, breaking it down into measurable steps and committing to time lines can make an enormous difference in following through.

Putting the Next Steps in Writing

Note to facilitator: Depending on whether the participants in this workshops are heading off to or coming out of an internship, practicum or academic/training program, you will want to adapt the following activity accordingly.

Use the following text to set up this activity:

> Picture yourself at the end of your internship, practicum or the *Leading Edge* program and consider what your next steps will be. Take 15 minutes and craft one goal for yourself for after this program. Go back to your wheel and mission statement and use these as tools to guide you. For some, writing a goal will be easy and for others, this goal will seem fuzzy. Regardless, writing a goal is important for developing an action plan. A goal is more focused than a vision/mission statement. It represents an aim that you will take concrete steps towards achieving.

8. Goal Test

Introduce the "goal test" as a tool to help participants to articulate their goals in ways that support success.

Illustrative Example

You may want tc write the following illustrative example on flip chart to demonstrate the process:

Example: Initial goal: To get a job as a writer

To complete the "Goal Test" ask whether the goal is:

- conceivable? - Is it understandable as stated? (Yes)
- Believable? - Does the goal setter believe in the goal? For our purposes here, let's assume that the goal-setter believes it and could achieve it (ie. has all the necessary training and/ or experience to enter at desired level and does want it).
- Achievable? - Can it be accomplished? (Yes)
- Desirable? - Does the goal setter want and value the goal? (Yes)
- Measurable? - Is it time bound with clear outcomes? This is where the challenge usually lies.

ACTION PLANNING QUESTIONS

1. What is your goal for now? (Be as specific as possible)

2. If I am successful in achieving this goal, how will I know? What will success look like for me? What outcomes am I looking for?

3. What information about my goal am I missing? Where are the gaps (exploration outward and inward)? What do I need to know or confirm?

4. What tools, activities, resources do I need to use to achieve this goal and reach my outcomes?

5. What are my first steps? What will I do in the next 2 weeks? Be specific and concrete.

Brainstorm with the group how the goal could be restated to make it more measurable. Responses could include:

- Specify company where they would want to focus their work search efforts
- Specify time lines
- Specify position (title/tasks)
- Specify location
- Specify conditions (ex. Full-time, minimum pay requirements, etc.)

Revised Goal: To use my journalism skills and interests in feminist issues to get a part-time position as a staff writer for *Ms.* magazine while developing my creative writing skills by completing two courses in a Fine Arts program at a University in the city by August 2001.

From the revised goal, it is now possible to prioritize and clearly outline the action steps required for achievement. Often, when a goal is articulated through the goal test, new research requirements become obvious. In the above example, this person would need to identify a contact at *Ms.* to determine whether a part-time position is available and the specific skill requirements to work at this magazine. Step Two would be to research creative writing programs at various universities in the city where *Ms.* is located.

You may wish to demonstrate the process for goal testing with a real goal. To do this, ask for one participant who is willing to share their goal with the large group. Have the volunteer state their goal. Write the goal on flip chart and put it through the following goal test.

As a large group, work with the goal until it "passes the test."

Small Group Goal Test

Have participants complete the goal test in small groups of 3. Have them take 20 minutes to goal test each others' goals. Emphasize that it is acceptable not to have all the answers at this moment. Support participants to revise their goals as necessary.

9. Action Planning for the Next Steps of the Journey

The goals for this section are to help participants:

1. identify personal outcomes for success post-*Leading Edge* (ie. after completing the program or in their internships, co-op placements and practicums);

2. create specific action steps to achieve their goals.

In defining the steps of their action plan toward achieving a goal, it is important that participants have a sense of what success will be for them. Knowing what success looks like allows them to know and celebrate when they have accomplished their goal.

Provide participants with the Action Planning Questions handout which lists the following questions;

1. What is your goal for now? (Be as specific as possible)

2. If I am successful in achieving this goal, how will I know? What will success look like for me? What outcomes am I looking for?

3. What information about my goal am I missing? Where are the gaps (exploration outward and inward)? What do I need to know or confirm?

4. What tools, activities, resources do I need to use to achieve this goal and reach my outcomes?

5. What are my first steps? What will I do in the next 2 weeks? Be specific and concrete.

These questions serve as a guide/structure to participants' action plans. You may want to use the following illustrative example to demonstrate the process.

1. What is your goal for now? (Be as specific as possible)

   To start up my own computer design business and work part-time in a marketing firm.

2. If I am successful in achieving this goal, how will I know? What will success look like for me? What outcomes am I looking for?

   I will have a steady income and be working with a team. I will also have the opportunity to work independently from home so that I can spend more time with my family.

   Success will be when people call me and hire me for my computer services.

3. What information about my goal am I missing? Where are the gaps (exploration outward and inward)? What do I need to know or confirm?

   I need to know how to set up my own business and what marketing firms are hiring part-time staff.

   I need to try working from home to see if I enjoy it and/or information interview someone who works from home.

4. What tools, activities, resources do I need to use to achieve this goal and reach my outcomes?

   Information interviewing, résumé writing, proposal writing, networking

5. What are my first steps? What will I do in the next 2 weeks? Be specific and concrete.

   Do research on the Internet to find 3 available marketing jobs in the high tech field. Access my networks regarding possible openings and for business advice. Research programs on how to set up my own business.

Have participants take 45 minutes to reflect on their goals and answer these questions for themselves. If possible, invite them to find a place that is appropriate for quiet reflection.

Have them return to the group after they have completed the questions. Have participants get into pairs, choose someone with whom they feel comfortable sharing their action plans. Invite them to take 1 hour interviewing each other using the questions as a guide. The role of the interviewer is to be an active listener and not judge the action plan in anyway. They may ask questions and share observations and tips, but not analyze or judge. If the interviewer comments on the action plan, it should be constructive. The purpose of the interviews is to have each participant fully describe their action plans verbally in a positive and supportive atmosphere. Often, new insights are made when we have an opportunity to describe our plan to someone else. It also helps motivate us to action when we feel that our plans are well articulated and supported.

Debrief

Have participants return to the large group and share the learning that occurred in their interviews. What insights emerged? Encourage participants to keep their action plans in their portfolio.

10. Contingency Planning

As participants move to action, it is critical that adequate supports be in place. In decision-making, there is a tendency to focus considerable energy on goals and action plans. So, what happens when they hit the first road block along the way? It can be devastating. But, usually a barrier doesn't need to be an unscalable wall. Usually, barriers can be overcome and (perhaps with a few adaptation) the goal can still be pursued. Almost as important as coming up with goals, is having a "plan B" to fall back on when attempts to achieve the goal fall short. Introduce participants to contingency planning - a process to prepare for the barriers they may encounter in achieving their goals.

11. Barrier Brainstorm Activity

Choose a goal to work with for the purpose of demonstration. Ideally, a participant would volunteer their goal. If not, you may choose to use the sample revised goal from the above goal test activity or a goal from your own experience. In the large group, brainstorm the following:

External Barriers

What might get in the way? List on flip chart approximately eight external barriers (ie. factors that are beyond the control of the goal setter). You may want to use 2 flip chart sheets, with four barriers recorded on each.

Internal Barriers

What might stop the goal setter from achieving the goal? List on flip chart approximately eight internal barriers (ie. factors that are within the control of the goal setter).

Solution Brainstorm

Divide the group into four small groups. Provide one flip chart sheet to each group. Give the groups 20 minutes to brainstorm all of the possible ways that their barriers could be overcome. If you are working with the goal of a volunteer note that, for the purpose of this activity, the barriers and solutions may not be real to that participant. For this demonstration, the specific content and its relevance to the volunteer is not as important as understanding the process and realizing that barriers can be overcome.

Invite groups to present their solutions to the large group and post their flip charts.

Debrief

Facilitate a large group discussion. Encourage participants to share their reactions and learning. Highlight that even if the specific barriers that were brain-stormed never occur, the important leaning is that a process does exist to overcome barriers (even unforeseen ones). The best laid plans include the "what ifs." It's important to acknowledge that action plans are not singular of irreversible.

12. Closure of Consolidation: Planning the Next Steps of the Journey

Consolidate goal setting and action planning sections of the workshop by reviewing the following points:

- Goals setting and action planning should follow naturally from a career building process that incorporates labour market research, exploration inward, skills development and reflective learning;
- Goal are for now, not necessarily forever;
- It's important to think about the "what ifs" when initiating an action plan. Plans can change and be adapted according to circumstances;
- Find supports for your actions. You do not have to do this alone -- we all need cheering sections;
- Build in accountability by making a public commitment to participants, peers, friends, family or other supporters;
- To keep being motivated, you need to build in reward. Celebrate your successes not matter how large or small.

Before closing, have participants write down:

- one person that they will contact for moral support;
- one person to whom they will tell their goal

In plenary, ask participants to share what will be the first milestone of their goal and how they intend to celebrate it.

Thank participants for their contribution for the group process and provide an opportunity for participants to appropriately say good-bye (for now) to each other.

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